SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

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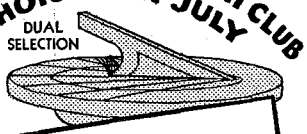

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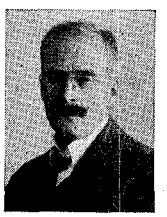

The Segelfoss, Norway, of Hamsun is now a town of movies and witches, motor-cars and legends. Youth and age, in many ways, fight and mingle in this novel. But it is an old man that sees it all. The eye of age has here made a gentle and rich panorama. The jaggedness of youthful vision has gone. Flint has given place to curves; sharpness to mist.

And it is an old man, August, who is the central and heroic person in *The Road Leads On.* He is aged and childlike at once; dreamy and fearfully efficient. His mind is made up of statistics and hallucinations. He blasts mighty rocks and lives in clouds. And about him is the human diversity of Segelfoss. He loves Cornelia: she is tormentingly in his old man's dreams; and she is a curtly clear-minded miss—in a way older than he is. She won't have him and she knows that she won't. Meanwhile she keenly bothers two young men of whom August is jealous. She dies from the kick of a horse; and August immediately forgets everything; he won't even go to the funeral; efficiency has made a clean sweep of sentiment.

Sex and work, in all their unsearchable ramifications, engross all of Segelfoss. There is a philosophic ramblingness in the novel. People meet and leave each other as if they were part of a somewhat orderly dream that was taking its time. There is a gentleness even to the adultery that takes place in the novel. A stabbing has its slowness. Work seems to merge with the Norway sky.

The Road Leads On is too much of a philosophic crazy-quilt to be an important artistic success. And sometimes it is hard to distinguish its gentle wisdom from simple tiredness. But there are fine and profound things in Hamsun's latest work. The old and romantic August Altmulig is somewhat like Don Quixote at his most ridiculously sad. There are characters among the druggists, bankers, peasants, wives, and witches of Hamsun that come at you with extreme daylight sharpness, and linger on. And some of the anecdotes in it (it has many; old men tell them) are permanently meaningful. Some of the writing has a sweet and primitive gravity like that of the Bible. Lastly, when August goes over the cliff with his thousand fleeing, frightened, symbolic sheep, we have a humor and a terror definitely beyond the literary moment.

ELI SIEGEL.

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There is an Alabama tradition which says that stars did fall, changing the destiny of the land and giving an ominous quality to its life and its people. Carl Carmer felt the quality immediately, and went about the country as if he were in a foreign land, setting down everything he could find in present and past life, and in legend, to explain and set forth the tradition. He has succeeded remarkably, and made a book filled from beginning to end with the atmosphere of the deep South, with its superstition, its violent temper, its nobility, its daring, its crime—a rich collection of stories from a country inhabited by Scotch, French, Negro, Indian, Cajan, and all possible combi-

(*Continued on page 4*)

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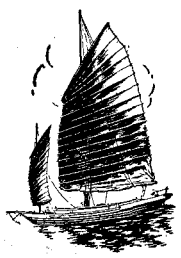

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(*Continued from page 2*)

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BERNICE KENYON.

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Mr. Hart has written a forceful and absorbing novel of American political life. Bayard Stuart, The Great One, is a young Philadelphia aristocrat of soaring ambition, great physique, and enormous appetites, who grows up to be a United States Senator, a big-time political boss, and a symbol of blatant and corrupt standpatism. (If you don't know who Bayard Stuart is, ask your local political boss.)

Mr. Hart is not particularly concerned with the magnitude and intricacies of Stuart's manipulations of tariffs and Presidential candidates. He packs most of them into Stuart's dramatic death-bed review of his life to his bastard son. What Mr. Hart shows us is the transmutation of young Stuart from an eager and self-confident young reformer filled with Harvard idealism into a ruthless politician. A frustrated love affair and the blocking of his youthful ambition to become Mayor of Philadelphia did it. Stuart's lust for power carried him into the well-dredged channels where he saw that power lay. Behind these psychological and physiological factors may be seen the social class which bred Stuart moulding him into the political ally of its industrial barons and petty lordlings.

Stuart is too robust a character to be called a type, but *The Great One* is a steadily ironic commentary on the American "aristocracy." It should be read by all those who are incensed by the current efforts of the professors to break the stranglehold of the Bayard Stuarts of finance and their lesser brethren of the political machines.

Mr. Hart writes with pleasing skill, and if a fault in this splendid book must be recorded it is his tendency to digress occasionally to incorporate an amusing trifle which adds nothing to the main stream of his tale. This is his first novel, but it stands on its own merits and on the strength of those one can readily predict for him a brilliant future.

ERNEST K. LINDLEY.

EVANGELISM IN ART

MODERN ART. By Thomas Craven. Simon and Schuster, 1934. $3.75.

According to Thomas Craven, art should have *meaning,* that is, it should reflect what he calls "the facts of life." His gods of the past are Hogarth and Daumier, his contemporary favorites Grosz, Benton, Rivera, and Orozco. Armed with these enthusiasms he proceeds to debunk the school of Paris which,

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Life is not all *Economics* . . .

SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE in coming months brims with tales of what people are doing and thinking. Here are a few:

Is Any Old Person Happy?
Are You Psychic?
Adopted Mother
Liars Are Fathers
Design for Eating
Under Sentence of Death
My Children See America
The Children's Radio Hour

Books for your Library

(Continued from page 4)

since the days of that awkward bungler Cézanne, has spent itself in an exploration of "methods" thereby abstracting itself from reality and becoming vain and without message.

Those who have heretofore felt an antipathy towards "modern art" will find that the author has flattered their prejudices in fulsome manner. He prefaces his work with an autobiographical denunciation of the spirit of Parisian bohemia, ignoring the inconvenient fact that the bohemianism of most artists is caused by poverty and a sense of failure. When a little success overcomes these afflictions bohemianism usually disappears—if the artist is serious. Craven then exploits the more lurid aspects of the lives of van Gogh, Gauguin and Modigliani. But these sensational tales of madness, lechery and disease neither explain nor belittle their art which transcends their biographies. Concerning living artists of the wrong kind we learn that Matisse should be both a rugmaker and a miniaturist and that Picasso's work is without meaning.

Turning to this country, Craven describes at length his wanderings to prove to his readers that America is varied, colorful and worth painting. He feels that the only hope for a true national art lies in an avoidance of the pernicious Parisian influence and in a concentration upon the American subject. He ignores the fact that in the last few years French influence has greatly diminished while the American Scene has become almost a drug on the market of American painting.

There is some truth in Craven's thesis but his evangelism is often arbitrary, belated, and extravagant.

MARGARET SCOLARI.

OUR DAILY BREAD, BY GOSTA LARSSON. *Vanguard*. $2.50.—An impressive novel of homely virtues, homely pathos, homely heroism, whose scenes are laid in Sweden, by a Swedish writer now living in America and writing in English. The struggle for mere existence of the proletariat is vividly pictured, culminating in a General Strike, which provides dramatic highlights of great intensity. The book reads like an excellent translation of an excellent novel in the Scandinavian tradition.

A LAW UNTO THEMSELVES, BY LOVEDAY PRIOR. *Little Brown*. $2.50.—A faithful recreation of life among the little robber barons of thirteenth century Austria. In a few places the story flares into vivid reality. Generally it is dull.

(Continued on page 15)

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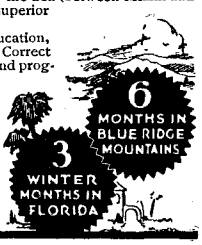

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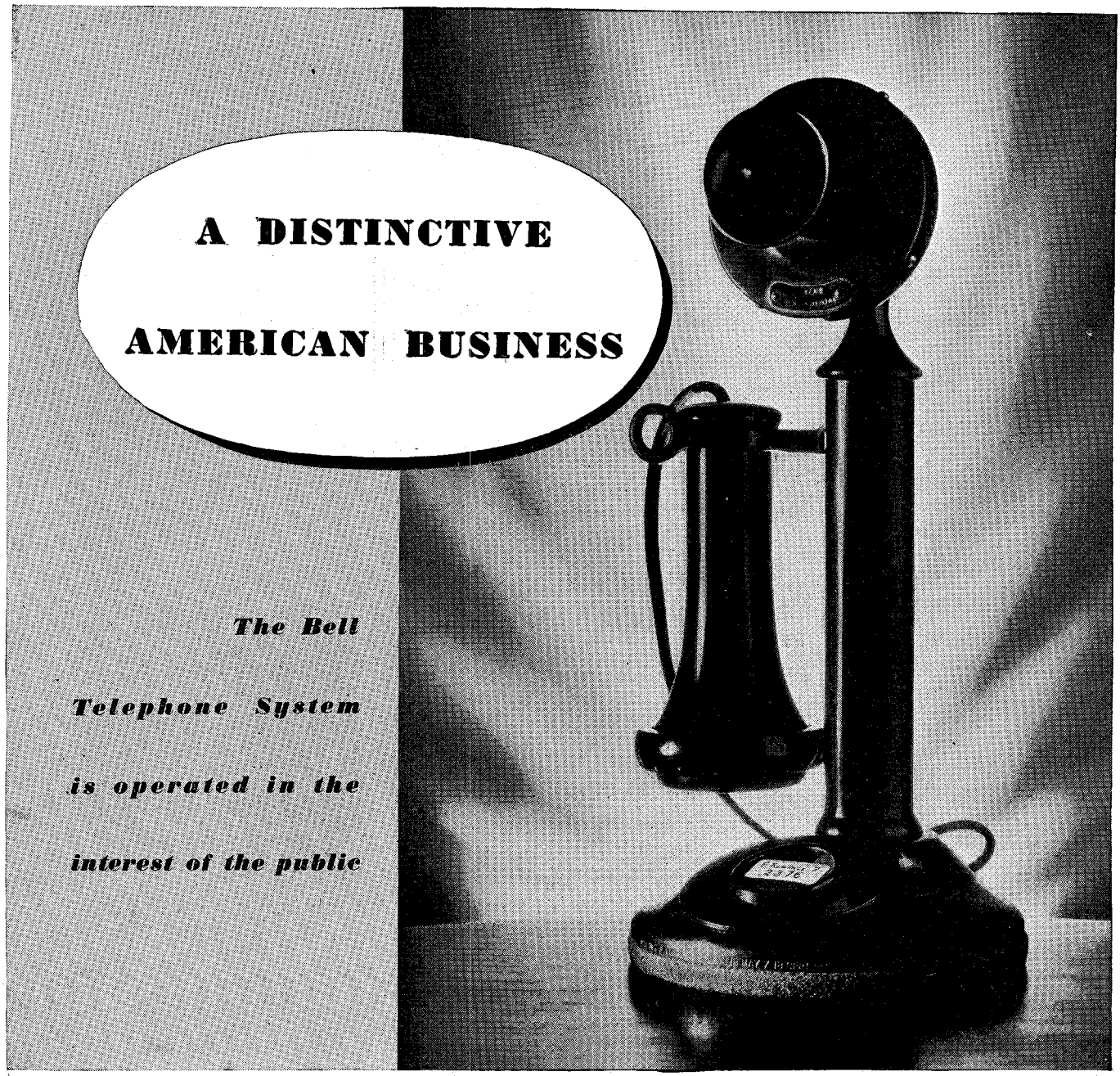

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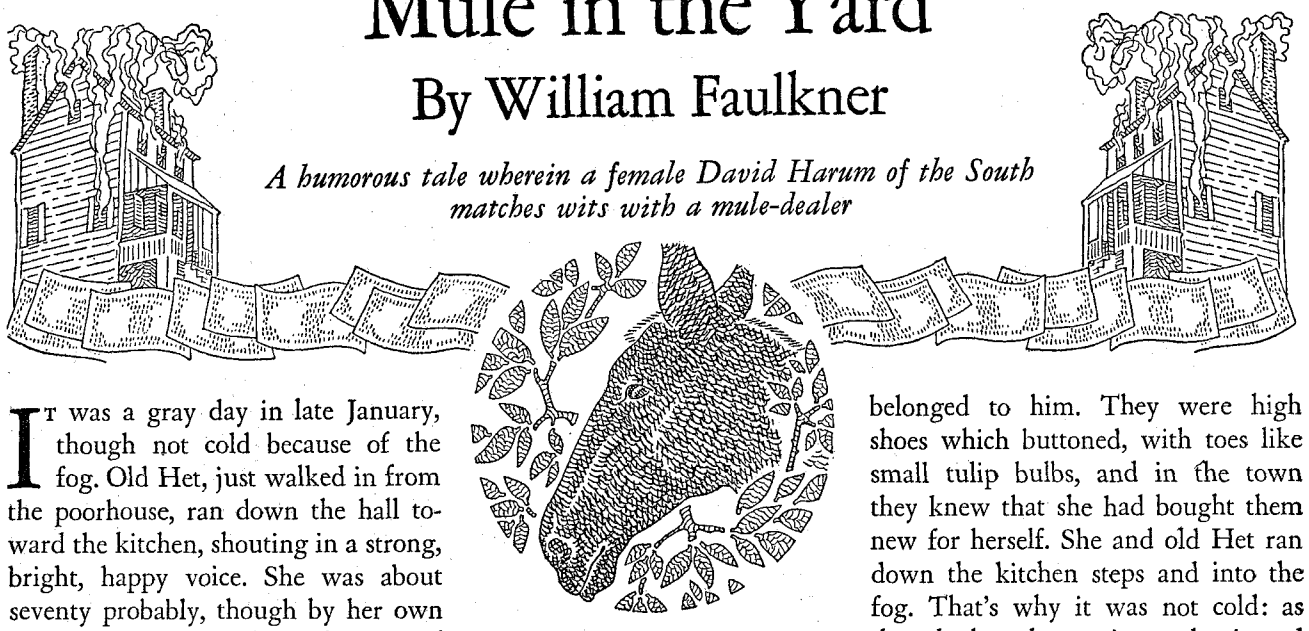
SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

VOL. XCVI AUGUST, 1934 NO. 2

Mule in the Yard

By William Faulkner

A humorous tale wherein a female David Harum of the South matches wits with a mule-dealer



It was a gray day in late January, though not cold because of the fog. Old Het, just walked in from the poorhouse, ran down the hall toward the kitchen, shouting in a strong, bright, happy voice. She was about seventy probably, though by her own counting, calculated from the ages of various housewives in the town from brides to grandmothers whom she claimed to have nursed in infancy, she would have to be around a hundred and at least triplets. Tall, lean, fog-beaded, in tennis shoes and a long rat-colored cloak trimmed with what forty or fifty years ago had been fur, a modish though not new purple toque set upon her headrag and carrying (time was when she made her weekly rounds from kitchen to kitchen carrying a brocaded carpetbag though since the advent of the ten-cent stores the carpetbag became an endless succession of the convenient paper receptacles with which they supply their customers for a few cents) the shopping-bag, she ran into the kitchen and shouted with strong and childlike pleasure: "Miss Mannie! Mule in de yard!"

Mrs. Hait, stooping to the stove, in the act of drawing from it a scuttle of live ashes, jerked upright; clutching the scuttle, she glared at old Het, then she too spoke at once, strong too, immediate. "Them sons of bitches," she said. She left the kitchen, not running exactly, yet with a kind of outraged celerity, carrying the scuttle—a compact woman of forty-odd, with an air of indomitable yet relieved bereavement, as though that which had relicted her had been a woman and a not particularly valuable one at that. She wore a calico wrapper and a sweater coat, and a man's felt hat which they in the town knew had belonged to her ten years' dead husband. But the man's shoes had not belonged to him. They were high shoes which buttoned, with toes like small tulip bulbs, and in the town they knew that she had bought them new for herself. She and old Het ran down the kitchen steps and into the fog. That's why it was not cold: as though there lay supine and prisoned between earth and mist the long winter night's suspiration of the sleeping town in dark, close rooms—the slumber and the rousing; the stale waking thermostatic, by re-eating heat-engendered: it lay like a scum of cold grease upon the steps and the wooden entrance to the basement and upon the narrow plank walk which led to a shed building in the corner of the yard: upon these planks, running and still carrying the scuttle of live ashes, Mrs. Hait skated viciously.

"Watch out!" old Het, footed securely by her rubber soles, cried happily. "Dey in de front!" Mrs. Hait did not fall. She did not even pause. She took in the immediate scene with one cold glare and was running again when there appeared at the corner of the house and apparently having been born before their eyes of the fog itself, a mule. It looked taller than a giraffe. Longheaded, with a flying halter about its scissorlike ears, it rushed down upon them with violent and apparitionlike suddenness.

"Dar hit!" old Het cried, waving the shopping-bag. "Hoo!" Mrs. Hait whirled. Again she skidded savagely on the greasy planks as she and the mule rushed parallel with one another toward the shed building, from whose open doorway there now projected the static and astonished face of a cow. To the cow the fog-born mule doubtless looked taller and more incredibly sudden than a giraffe even, and apparently bent upon charging right through the shed as though

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it were made of straw or were purely and simply mirage. The cow's head likewise had a quality transient and abrupt and unmundane. It vanished, sucked into invisibility like a match flame, though the mind knew and the reason insisted that she had withdrawn into the shed, from which, as proof's burden, there came an indescribable sound of shock and alarm by shed and beast engendered, analogous to a single note from a profoundly struck lyre or harp. Toward this sound Mrs. Hait sprang, immediately, as if by pure reflex, as though in invulnerable compact of female with female against a world of mule and man. She and the mule converged upon the shed at top speed, the heavy scuttle poised lightly in her hand to hurl. Of course it did not take this long, and likewise it was the mule which refused the gambit. Old Het was still shouting "Dar hit! Dar hit!" when it swerved and rushed at her where she stood tall as a stove pipe, holding the shopping-bag which she swung at the beast as it rushed past her and vanished beyond the other corner of the house as though sucked back into the fog which had produced it, profound and instantaneous and without any sound.

With that unhasteful celerity Mrs. Hait turned and set the scuttle down on the brick coping of the cellar entrance and she and old Het turned the corner of the house in time to see the now wraithlike mule at the moment when its course converged with that of a choleric-looking rooster and eight Rhode Island Red hens emerging from beneath the house. Then for an instant its progress assumed the appearance and trappings of an apotheosis: hell-born and hell-returning, in the act of dissolving completely into the fog, it seemed to rise vanishing into a sunless and dimensionless medium borne upon and enclosed by small winged goblins.

"Dey's mo in de front!" old Het cried.

"Them sons of bitches," Mrs. Hait said, again in that grim, prescient voice without rancor or heat. It was not the mules to which she referred; it was not even the owner of them. It was her whole town-dwelling history as dated from that April dawn ten years ago when what was left of Hait had been gathered from the mangled remains of five mules and several feet of new Manila rope on a blind curve of the railroad just out of town; the geographical hap of her very home; the very components of her bereavement—the mules, the defunct husband, and the owner of them. His name was Snopes; in the town they knew about him too—how he bought his stock at the Memphis market and brought it to Jefferson and sold it to farmers and widows and orphans black and white, for whatever he could contrive—down to a certain figure; and about how (usually in the dead season of winter) teams and even small droves of his stock would escape from the fenced pasture where he kept them and, tied one to another with sometimes quite new hemp rope (and which item Snopes included in the subsequent claim), would be annihilated by freight trains on the same blind curve which was to be the scene of Hait's exit from this world; once a town wag sent him through the mail a printed train schedule for the division. A squat, pasty man perennially tieless and with a strained, harried expression, at stated intervals he passed athwart the peaceful and somnolent life of the town in dust and uproar, his advent heralded by shouts and cries, his passing marked by a yellow cloud filled with tossing jug-shaped heads and clattering hooves and the same forlorn and earnest cries of the drovers; and last of all and well back out of the dust, Snopes himself moving at a harried and panting trot, since it was said in the town that he was deathly afraid of the very beasts in which he cleverly dealt.

The path which he must follow from the railroad station to his pasture crossed the edge of town near Hait's home; Hait and Mrs. Hait had not been in the house a week before they waked one morning to find it surrounded by galloping mules and the air filled with the shouts and cries of the drovers. But it was not until that April dawn some years later, when those who reached the scene first found what might be termed foreign matter among the mangled mules and the savage fragments of new rope, that the town suspected that Hait stood in any closer relationship to Snopes and the mules than that of helping at periodical intervals to drive them out of his front yard. After that they believed that they knew; in a three days' recess of interest, surprise, and curiosity they watched to see if Snopes would try to collect on Hait also.

But they learned only that the adjuster appeared and called upon Mrs. Hait and that a few days later she cashed a check for eight thousand five hundred dollars, since this was back in the old halcyon days when even the companies considered their southern branches and divisions the legitimate prey of all who dwelt beside them. She took the cash: she stood in her sweater coat and the hat which Hait had been wearing on the fatal morning a week ago and listened in cold, grim silence while the teller counted the money and the president and the cashier tried to explain to her the virtues of a bond, then of a savings account, then of a checking account, and departed with the money in a salt sack under her apron; after a time she painted her house: that serviceable and time-defying color which the railroad station was painted, as though out of sentiment or (as some said) gratitude.

The adjuster also summoned Snopes into conference, from which he emerged not only more harried-looking than ever, but with his face stamped with a bewildered dismay which it was to wear from then on, and that was the last time his pasture fence was ever

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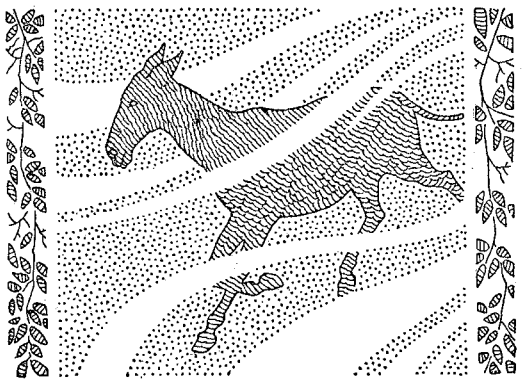

to give inexplicably away at dead of night upon mules coupled in threes and fours by adequate rope even though not always new. And then it seemed as though the mules themselves knew this, as if, even while haltered at the Memphis block at his bid, they sensed it somehow as they sensed that he was afraid of them. Now, three or four times a year and as though by fiendish concord and as soon as they were freed of the box car, the entire uproar—the dust cloud filled with shouts earnest, harried, and dismayed, with plunging demoniac shapes—would become translated in a single burst of perverse and uncontrollable violence, without any intervening contact with time, space, or earth, across the peaceful and astonished town and into Mrs. Hait's yard, where, in a certain hapless despair which abrogated for the moment even physical fear, Snopes ducked and dodged among the thundering shapes about the house (for whose very impervious paint the town believed that he felt he had paid and whose inmate lived within it a life of idle and queenlike ease on money which he considered at least partly his own) while gradually that section and neighborhood gathered to look on from behind adjacent window curtains and porches screened and not, and from the sidewalks and even from halted wagons and cars in the street—housewives in the wrappers and boudoir caps of morning, children on the way to school, casual Negroes and casual whites in static and entertained repose.

They were all there when, followed by old Het and carrying the stub of a worn-out broom, Mrs. Hait ran around the next corner and onto the handkerchief-sized plot of earth which she called her front yard. It was small; any creature with a running stride of three feet could have spanned it in two paces, yet at the moment, due perhaps to the myopic and distortive quality of the fog, it seemed to be as incredibly full of mad life as a drop of water beneath the microscope. Yet again she did not falter. With the broom clutched in her hand and apparently with a kind of sublime faith in her own invulnerability, she rushed on after the haltered mule which was still in that arrested and wraithlike process of vanishing furiously into the fog, its wake indicated by the tossing and dispersing shapes of the nine chickens like so many jagged scraps of paper in the dying air blast of an automobile, and the madly dodging figure of a man. The man was Snopes; beaded too with moisture, his wild face gaped with hoarse shouting and the two heavy lines of shaven beard descending from the corners of it as though in alluvial retrospect of years of tobacco, he screamed at her: "Fore God, Miz Hait! I done everything I could!" She didn't even look at him.

"Ketch that big un with the bridle on," she said in her cold, panting voice. "Git that big un outen here."

"Sho!" Snopes shrieked. "Jest let um take their time. Jest don't git um excited now."

"Watch out!" old Het shouted. "He headin fer de back again!"

"Git the rope," Mrs. Hait said, running again. Snopes glared back at old Het.

"Fore God, where is ere rope?" he shouted.

"In de cellar fo God!" old Het shouted, also without pausing. "Go roun de udder way en head um." Again she and Mrs. Hait turned the corner in time to see again the still-vanishing mule with the halter once more in the act of floating lightly onward in its cloud of chickens with which, they being able to pass under the house and so on the chord of a circle while it had to go around on the arc, it had once more coincided. When they turned the next corner they were in the back yard again.

"Fo God!" old Het cried. "He fixin to misuse de cow!" For they had gained on the mule now, since it had stopped. In fact, they came around the corner on a tableau. The cow now stood in the centre of the yard. She and the mule faced one another a few feet apart. Motionless, with lowered heads and braced forelegs, they looked like two book ends from two distinct pairs of a general pattern which some one of amateurly bucolic leanings might have purchased, and which some child had salvaged, brought into idle juxtaposition and then forgotten; and, his head and shoulders projecting above the back-flung slant of the cellar entrance where the scuttle still sat, Snopes standing as though buried to the armpits for a Spanish-Indian-American suttee. Only again it did not take this long. It was less than tableau; it was one of those things which later even memory cannot quite affirm. Now and in turn, man and cow and mule vanished beyond the next corner, Snopes now in the lead, carrying the rope, the cow next with her tail rigid and raked slightly like the stern staff of a boat. Mrs. Hait and old Het ran on, passing the open cellar gaping upon its accumulation of human necessities and widowed womanyears—boxes for kindling wood, old papers and magazines, the broken and outworn furniture and utensils which no woman ever throws away; a pile of coal and another of pitch pine for priming fires—and ran on and turned the next corner to see man and cow and mule all vanishing

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now in the wild cloud of ubiquitous chickens which had once more crossed beneath the house and emerged. They ran on, Mrs. Hait in grim and unflagging silence, old Het with the eager and happy amazement of a child. But when they gained the front again they saw only Snopes. He lay flat on his stomach, his head and shoulders upreared by his outstretched arms, his coat tail swept forward by its own arrested momentum about his head so that from beneath it his slack-jawed face mused in wild repose like that of a burlesqued nun.

"Whar'd dey go?" old Het shouted at him. He didn't answer.

"Dey tightenin on de curves!" she cried. "Dey already in de back again!" That's where they were. The cow made a feint at running into her shed, but deciding perhaps that her speed was too great, she whirled in a final desperation of despair-like valor. But they did not see this, nor see the mule, swerving to pass her, crash and blunder for an instant at the open cellar door before going on. When they arrived, the mule was gone. The scuttle was gone too, but they did not notice it; they saw only the cow standing in the centre of the yard as before, panting, rigid, with braced forelegs and lowered head facing nothing, as if the child had returned and removed one of the book ends for some newer purpose or game. They ran on. Mrs. Hait ran heavily now, her mouth too open, her face putty-colored and one hand pressed to her side. So slow was their progress that the mule in its third circuit of the house overtook them from behind and soared past with undiminished speed, with brief demon thunder and a keen ammonia-sweet reek of sweat sudden and sharp as a jeering cry, and was gone. Yet they ran doggedly on around the next corner in time to see it succeed at last in vanishing into the fog; they heard its hoofs, brief, staccato, and derisive, on the paved street, dying away.

"Well!" old Het said, stopping. She panted, happily. "Gentlemen, hush! Ain't we had—" Then she became stone still; slowly her head turned, high-nosed, her nostrils pulsing; perhaps for the instant she saw the open cellar door as they had last passed it, with no scuttle beside it. "Fo God I smells smoke!" she said. "Chile, run, git yo money."

That was still early, not yet ten o'clock. By noon the house had burned to the ground. There was a farmers' supply store where Snopes could be usually found; more than one had made a point of finding him there by that time. They told him about how when the fire engine and the crowd reached the scene, Mrs. Hait, followed by old Het carrying her shopping-bag in one hand and a framed portrait of Mr. Hait in the other, emerged with an umbrella and wearing a new, dun-colored, mail-order coat, in one pocket of which lay a fruit jar filled with smoothly rolled banknotes and in the other a heavy, nickel-plated pistol, and crossed the street to the house opposite, where with old Het beside her in another rocker, she had been sitting ever since on the veranda, grim, inscrutable, the two of them rocking steadily, while hoarse and tireless men hurled her dishes and furniture and bedding up and down the street.

"What are you telling me for?" Snopes said. "Hit warn't me that set that ere scuttle of live fire where the first thing that passed would knock hit into the cellar."

"It was you that opened the cellar door, though."

"Sho. And for what? To git that rope, her own rope, where she told me to git it."

"To catch your mule with, that was trespassing on her property. You can't get out of it this time, I. O. There ain't a jury in the county that won't find for her."

"Yes. I reckon not. And just because she is a woman. That's why. Because she is a durn woman. All right. Let her go to her durn jury with hit. I can talk too; I reckon hit's a few things I could tell a jury myself about—" He ceased. They were watching him.

"What? Tell a jury about what?"

"Nothing. Because hit ain't going to no jury. A jury between her and me? Me and Mannie Hait? You boys don't know her if you think she's going to make trouble over a pure acci-dent couldn't nobody help. Why, there ain't a fairer, finer woman in the county than Miz Mannie Hait. I just wisht I had a opportunity to tell her so." The opportunity came at once. Old Het was behind her, carrying the shopping-bag. Mrs. Hait looked once, quietly, about at the faces, making no response to the murmur of curious salutation, then not again. She didn't look at Snopes long either, nor talk to him long.

"I come to buy that mule," she said.

"What mule?" They looked at one another. "You'd like to own that mule?" She looked at him. "Hit'll cost you a hundred and fifty, Miss Mannie."

"You mean dollars?"

"I don't mean dimes nor nickels neither, Miss Mannie."

"Dollars," she said. "That's more than mules was in Hait's time."

"Lots of things is different since Hait's time. Including you and me."

"I reckon so," she said. Then she went away. She turned without a word, old Het following.

"Maybe one of them others you looked at this morning would suit you," Snopes said. She didn't answer. Then they were gone.

"I don't know as I would have said that last to her," one said.

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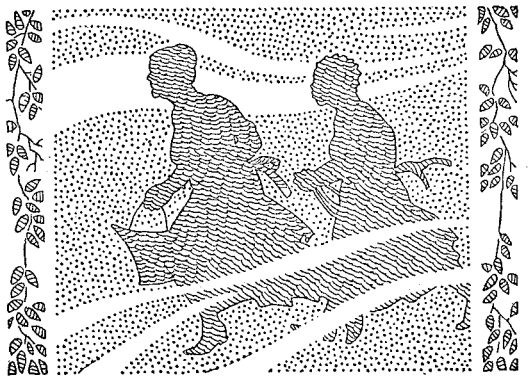

"What for?" Snopes said. "If she was aiming to law something outen me about that fire, you reckon she would have come and offered to pay me money for hit?" That was about one o'clock. About four o'clock he was shouldering his way through a throng of Negroes before a cheap grocery store when one called his name. It was old Het, the now bulging shopping-bag on her arm, eating bananas from a paper sack.

"Fo God I wuz jest dis minute huntin fer you," she said. She handed the banana to a woman beside her and delved and fumbled in the shopping-bag and extended a greenback. "Miss Mannie gimme dis to give you; I wuz jest on de way to de sto whar you stay at. Here." He took the bill.

"What's this? From Miz Hait?"

"Fer de mule." The bill was for ten dollars. "You don't need to gimme no receipt. I kin be de witness I give hit to you."

"Ten dollars? For that mule? I told her a hundred and fifty dollars."

"You'll have to fix dat up wid her yo'self. She jest gimme dis to give ter you when she sot out to fetch de mule."

"Set out to fetch— She went out there herself and taken my mule outen my pasture?"

"Lawd, chile," old Het said, "Miss Mannie ain't skeerd of no mule. Ain't you done foun dat out?"

And then it became late, what with the yet short winter days; when she came in sight of the two gaunt chimneys against the sunset, evening was already finding itself. But she could smell the ham cooking before she came in sight of the cow shed even, though she could not see it until she came around in front where the fire burned beneath an iron skillet set on bricks and where nearby Mrs. Hait was milking the cow. "Well," old Het said, "you is settled down, ain't you?" She looked into the shed, neated and raked and swept even, and floored now with fresh hay. A clean new lantern burned on a box, beside it a pallet bed was spread neatly on the straw and turned neatly back for the night. "Why, you is fixed up," she said with pleased astonishment. Within the door was a kitchen chair. She drew it out and sat down beside the skillet and laid the bulging shopping-bag beside her.

"I'll tend dis meat whilst you milks. I'd offer to strip dat cow fer you ef I wuzn't so wo out wid all dis excitement we been had." She looked around her. "I don't believe I sees yo new mule, dough." Mrs. Hait grunted, her head against the cow's flank. After a moment she said,

"Did you give him that money?"

"I give um ter him. He ack surprise at first, lak maybe he think you didn't aim to trade dat quick. I tole him to settle de details wid you later. He taken de money, dough. So I reckin dat's offen his mine en yo'n bofe." Again Mrs. Hait grunted. Old Het turned the ham in the skillet. Beside it the coffee pot bubbled and steamed. "Cawfee smell good too," she said. "I ain't had no appetite in years now. A bird couldn't live on de vittles I eats. But jest lemme git a whiff er cawfee en seem lak hit always whets me a little. Now, ef you jest had nudder little piece o dis ham, now— Fo God, you got company aready." But Mrs. Hait did not even look up until she had finished. Then she turned without rising from the box on which she sat.

"I reckon you and me better have a little talk," Snopes said. "I reckon I got something that belongs to you and I hear you got something that belongs to me." He looked about, quickly, ceaselessly, while old Het watched him. He turned to her. "You go away, aunty. I don't reckon you want to set here and listen to us."

"Lawd, honey," old Het said. "Don't you mind me. I done already had so much troubles myself dat I kin set en listen to udder folks' widout hit worryin me a-tall. You gawn talk whut you came ter talk; I jest set here en tend de ham." Snopes looked at Mrs. Hait.

"Ain't you going to make her go away?" he said.

"What for?" Mrs. Hait said. "I reckon she ain't the first critter that ever come on this yard when hit wanted and went or stayed when hit liked." Snopes made a gesture, brief, fretted, restrained.

"Well," he said. "All right. So you taken the mule."

"I paid you for it. She give you the money."

"Ten dollars. For a hundred-and-fifty-dollar mule. Ten dollars."

"I don't know anything about hundred-and-fifty-dollar mules. All I know is what the railroad paid." Now Snopes looked at her for a full moment.

"What do you mean?"

"Them sixty dollars a head the railroad used to pay you for mules back when you and Hait——"

"Hush," Snopes said; he looked about again, quick, ceaseless. "All right. Even call it sixty dollars. But you just sent me ten."

"Yes. I sent you the difference." He looked at her, perfectly still. "Between that mule and what you owed Hait."

"What I owed——"

"For getting them five mules onto the tr——"

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"Hush!" he cried. "Hush!" Her voice went on, cold, grim, level.

"For helping you. You paid him fifty dollars each time, and the railroad paid you sixty dollars a head for the mules. Ain't that right?" He watched her. "The last time you never paid him. So I taken that mule instead. And I sent you the ten dollars difference."

"Yes," he said in a tone of quiet, swift, profound bemusement; then he cried: "But look! Here's where I got you. Hit was our agreement that I wouldn't never owe him nothing until after the mules was——"

"I reckon you better hush yourself," Mrs. Hait said.

"—until hit was over. And this time, when over had come, I never owed nobody no money because the man hit would have been owed to wasn't nobody," he cried triumphantly. "You see?" Sitting on the box, motionless, downlooking, Mrs. Hait seemed to muse. "So you just take your ten dollars back and tell me where my mule is and we'll just go back good friends to where we started at. Fore God, I'm as sorry as ere a living man about that fire——"

"Fo God!" old Het said, "hit was a blaze, wuzn't it?"

"—but likely with all that ere railroad money you still got, you just been wanting a chance to build new, all along. So here. Take hit." He put the money into her hand. "Where's my mule?" But Mrs. Hait didn't move at once.

"You want to give it back to me?" she said.

"Sho. We been friends all the time; now we'll just go back to where we left off being. I don't hold no hard feelings and don't you hold none. Where you got the mule hid?"

"Up at the end of that ravine ditch behind Spilmer's," she said.

"Sho. I know. A good, sheltered place, since you ain't got nere barn. Only if you'd a just left hit in the pasture, hit would a saved us both trouble. But hit ain't no hard feelings though. And so I'll bid you goodnight. You're all fixed up, I see. I reckon you could save some more money by not building no house a-tall."

"I reckon I could," Mrs. Hait said. But he was gone.

"Whut did you leave de mule dar fer?" old Het said.

"I reckon that's far enough," Mrs. Hait said.

"Fer enough?" But Mrs. Hait came and looked into the skillet, and old Het said, "Wuz hit me er you dat mentioned something erbout er nudder piece o dis ham?" So they were both eating when in the not-quite-yet accomplished twilight Snopes returned. He came up quietly and stood, holding his hands to the blaze as if he were quite cold. He did not look at any one now.

"I reckon I'll take that ere ten dollars," he said.

"What ten dollars?" Mrs. Hait said. He seemed to muse upon the fire. Mrs. Hait and old Het chewed quietly, old Het alone watching him.

"You ain't going to give hit back to me?" he said.

"You was the one that said to let's go back to where we started," Mrs. Hait said.

"Fo God you wuz, en dat's de fack," old Het said. Snopes mused upon the fire; he spoke in a tone of musing and amazed despair:

"I go to the worry and the risk and the agoment for years and years and I get sixty dollars. And you, one time, without no trouble and no risk, without even knowing you are going to git it, git eighty-five hundred dollars. I never begrudged hit to you; can't nere a man say I did, even if hit did seem a little strange that you should git it all when he wasn't working for you and you never even knowed where he was at and what doing; that all you done to git it was to be married to him. And now, after all these ten years of not begrudging you hit, you taken the best mule I had and you ain't even going to pay me ten dollars for hit. Hit ain't right. Hit ain't justice."

"You got de mule back, en you ain't satisfried yit," old Het said. "Whut does you want?" Now Snopes looked at Mrs. Hait.

"For the last time I ask hit," he said. "Will you or won't you give hit back?"

"Give what back?" Mrs. Hait said. Snopes turned. He stumbled over something—it was old Het's shopping-bag—and recovered and went on. They could see him in silhouette, as though framed by the two blackened chimneys against the dying west; they saw him fling up both clenched hands in a gesture almost Gallic, of resignation and impotent despair. Then he was gone. Old Het was watching Mrs. Hait.

"Honey," she said. "Whut did you do wid de mule?" Mrs. Hait leaned forward to the fire. On her plate lay a stale biscuit. She lifted the skillet and poured over the biscuit the grease in which the ham had cooked.

"I shot it," she said.

"You which?" old Het said. Mrs. Hait began to eat the biscuit. "Well," old Het said, happily, "de mule burnt de house en you shot de mule. Dat's whut I calls justice." It was getting dark fast now, and before her was still the three-mile walk to the poorhouse. But the dark would last a long time in January, and the poorhouse too would not move at once. She sighed with weary and happy relaxation. "Gentlemen, hush! Ain't we had a day!"

Next month: "Kneel to the Rising Sun" by ERSKINE CALDWELL, *"The Combination," a story of the trotting tracks, by* EVAN SHIPMAN, *and other stories.*

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The House of the Far and Lost

A Story of England

By Thomas Wolfe

In the fall of that year I lived out about a mile from town in a house set back from the Ventnor Road. The house was called a "farm"—Hill-top Farm, or Far-end Farm, or some such name as that—but it was really no farm at all. It was a magnificent house of the weathered gray stone they have in that country, as if in the very quality of the wet heavy air there is the soft thick gray of time itself, sternly yet beautifully soaking down forever on you—and enriching everything it touches—grass, foliage, brick, ivy, the fresh moist color of the people's faces, and old gray stone with the incomparable weathering of time.

The house was set back off the road at a distance of several hundred yards, possibly a quarter of a mile, and one reached it by means of a road bordered by rows of tall trees which arched above the road, and which made me think of home at night when the stormy wind howled in their tossed branches. On each side of the road were the rugby fields of two of the colleges and in the afternoon I could look out and down and see the fresh moist green of the playing fields, and watch young college fellows, dressed in their shorts and jerseys, and with their bare knees scurfed with grass and turf as they twisted, struggled, swayed, and scrambled for a moment in the scrimmage-circle, and then broke free, running, dodging, passing the ball as they were tackled, filling the moist air with their sharp cries of sport. They did not have the desperate, the grimly determined, the almost professional earnestness that the college teams at home have; their scurfed and muddy knees, their swaying scrambling scrimmages, the swift breaking away and running, their panting breath and crisp clear voices gave them the appearance of grown-up boys.

Once when I had come up the road in afternoon while they were playing, the ball got away from them and came bounding out into the road before me, and I ran after it to retrieve it as we used to do when passing a field where boys were playing baseball. One of the players came over to the edge of the field and stood there waiting with his hands upon his hips while I got the ball: he was panting hard, his face was flushed, and his blond hair tousled, but when I threw the ball to him, he said "Thanks very much!" crisply and courteously—getting the same sound into the word *"very"* that they got in "A*me*rican," a sound that always repelled me a little because it seemed to have some scornful aloofness and patronage in it.

For a moment I watched him as he trotted briskly away on to the field again: the players stood there waiting, panting, casual, their hands upon their hips; he passed the ball into the scrimmage, the pattern swayed, rocked, scrambled, and broke sharply out in open play again, and everything looked incredibly strange, near, and familiar.

I felt that I had always known it, that it had always been mine, and that it was as familiar to me as everything I had seen or known in my childhood. Even the texture of the earth looked familiar, and felt moist and firm and springy when I stepped on it, and the stormy howling of the wind in that avenue of great trees at night, was wild and desolate and demented as it had been when I was eight years old and could lie in

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my bed at night and hear the great oaks howling on the hill above my father's house.

The name of the people in the house was Coulson: I made arrangements with the woman at once to come and live there: she was a tall, weathered-looking woman of middle age, we talked together in the hall. The hall was made of marble flags and went directly out onto a gravelled walk.

The woman was crisp, cheerful, and worldly looking. She was still quite handsome. She wore a well-cut skirt of woollen plaid, and a silk blouse: when she talked she kept her arms folded because the air in the hall was chilly, and she held a cigarette in the fingers of one hand. A shaggy brown dog came out and nosed upward toward her hand as she was talking and she put her hand upon its head and scratched it gently. When I told her I wanted to move in the next day, she said briskly and cheerfully:

"Right you are! You'll find everything ready when you get here!" Then she asked if I was at the university. I said no, and added, with a feeling of difficulty and naked desolation, that I was a "writer," and was coming there to work. I was twenty-four years old.

"Then I am sure that what you do will be *very, very* good!" she said cheerfully and decisively. "We have had several Americans in the house before and all of them were very clever! All the Americans we have had here were very clever people," said the woman. "I'm sure that you will like it." Then she walked to the door with me to say good-bye. As we stood there, there was the sound of a small motor-car coming to a halt and in a moment a girl came swiftly across the gravel space outside and entered the hall. She was tall, slender, very lovely, but she had the same bright hard look in her eye the woman had, the same faint, hard smile around the edges of her mouth.

"Edith," the woman said in her crisp, curiously incisive tone, "this young man is an American—he is coming here tomorrow." The girl looked at me for a moment with her hard bright glance, thrust out a small gloved hand, and shook hands briefly, a swift firm greeting.

"Oh! How d'ye do!" she said. "I hope you will like it here." Then she went on down the hall, entered a room on the left, and closed the door behind her.

Her voice had been crisp and certain like her mother's, but it was also cool, young, and sweet, with music in it, and later as I went down the road, I could still hear it.

That was a wonderful house, and the people there were wonderful people. Later, I could not forget them. I seemed to have known them all my life, and to know all about their lives. They seemed as familiar to me as my own blood and I knew them with a knowledge that went deep below the roots of thought or memory. We did not talk together often, or tell any of our lives to one another. It will be very hard to tell about it—the way we felt and lived together in that house—because it was one of those simple and profound experiences of life which people seem always to have known when it happens to them, but for which there is no language.

And yet, like a child's half-captured vision of some magic country he has known, and which haunts his days with strangeness and the sense of immanent, glorious re-discovery, the word that would unlock it all seems constantly to be almost on our lips, waiting just outside the gateway of our memory, just a shape, a phrase, a sound away the moment that we choose to utter it—but when we try to say the thing, something fades within our mind like fading light, and something melts within our grasp like painted smoke, and something goes forever when we try to touch it.

The nearest I could come to it was this: In that house I sometimes felt the greatest peace and solitude that I had ever known. But I always knew the other people in the house were there. I could sit in my sitting-room at night and hear nothing but the stormy moaning of the wind outside in the great trees, the small gaseous flare and jet from time to time of the coal fire burning in the grate—and silence, strong living lonely silence that moved and waited in the house at night—and I would always know that they were there.

I did not have to hear them enter or go past my door, nor did I have to hear doors close or open in the house, or listen to their voices: if I had never seen them, heard them, spoken to them, it would have been the same—I should have known they were there.

It was something I had always known, and had known it would happen to me, and now it was there with all the strangeness and dark mystery of an awaited thing. I knew them, felt them, lived among them with a familiarity that had no need of sight or word or speech. And the memory of that house and of my silent fellowship with all the people there was somehow mixed with an image of dark time. It was one of those sorrowful and unchanging images which, among all the blazing stream of images that passed constantly their stream of fire across my mind, was somehow fixed, detached, and everlasting, full of a sorrow, certitude, and mystery that I could not fathom, but that wore forever on it the old sad light of waning day—a light from which all the heat, the violence, and the substance of furious dusty day had vanished, and was itself like time, unearthly-of-the-earth, remote, detached, and everlasting.

And that fixed and changeless image of dark time was this: In an old house of time I lived alone, and

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yet had other people all around me, and they never spoke to me, or I to them. They came and went like silence in the house, but I always knew that they were there. I would be sitting by a window in a room, and I would know then they were moving in the house, and darkness, sorrow, and strong silence dwelt within us, and our eyes were quiet, full of sorrow, peace, and knowledge, and our faces dark, our tongues silent, and we never spoke. I could not remember how their faces looked, but they were all familiar to me as my father's face, and we had known one another forever, and we lived together in the ancient house of time, dark time, and silence, sorrow, certitude, and peace were in us. Such was the image of dark time that was to haunt my life thereafter, and into which, somehow, my life among the people in that house had passed.

In the house that year there lived, besides myself and Morison, the Coulsons, the father and mother and their daughter, and three men who had taken rooms together, and who were employed in a factory where motor-cars were made, two miles from town.

I think the reason that I could never forget these people later and seemed to know them all so well was that there was in all of them something ruined, lost, or broken—some precious and irretrievable quality which had gone out of them and which they could never get back again. Perhaps that was the reason that I liked them all so much, because with ruined people it is either love or hate: there is no middle way. The ruined people that we like are those who desperately have died, and lost their lives because they loved life dearly, and had that grandeur that makes such people spend prodigally the thing they love the best, and risk and lose their lives because it is so precious to them, and die at length because the seeds of life were in them. It is only the people who love life in this way who die —and these are the ruined people that we like.

The people in the house were people who had lost their lives because they loved the earth too well, and somehow had been slain by their hunger. And for this reason I liked them all, and could not forget them later: there seemed to have been some magic which had drawn them all together to the house, as if the house itself was a magnetic centre for lost people.

Certainly, the three men who worked at the motor-car factory had been drawn together for this reason. Two were still young men in their early twenties. The third man was much older. He was a man past forty, his name was Nicholl, he had served in the army during the war and had attained the rank of captain.

He had the spare, alert, and jaunty figure that one often finds in army men, an almost professional military quality that somehow seemed to set his figure upon a horse as if he had grown there, or had spent a lifetime in the cavalry. His face also had the same lean, bitten, professional military quality: his speech, although good-natured and very friendly, was clipped, incisive, jerky, and sporadic, his lean weather-beaten face was deeply, sharply scarred and sunken in the flanks, and he wore a small cropped mustache, and displayed long frontal teeth when he smiled—a spare, gaunt, toothy, yet attractive smile.

His left arm was withered, shrunken, almost useless, part of his hand and two of the fingers had been torn away by the blast or explosion which had destroyed his arm, but it was not this mutilation of the flesh that gave one the sense of a life that had been ruined, lost, and broken irretrievably. In fact, one quickly forgot his physical injury: his figure looked so spare, lean, jaunty, well-conditioned in its energetic fitness that one never thought of him as a cripple, nor pitied him for any disability. No: the ruin that one felt in him was never of the flesh, but of the spirit. Something seemed to have been exploded from his life—it was not the nerve-centres of his arm, but of his soul, that had been destroyed. There was in the man somewhere a terrible dead vacancy and emptiness, and that spare, lean figure that he carried so well seemed only to surround this vacancy like a kind of shell.

He was always smartly dressed in well-cut clothes that set well on his trim spruce figure. He was always in good spirits, immensely friendly in his clipped spare way, and he laughed frequently—a rather metallic cackle which came suddenly and ended as swiftly as it had begun. He seemed, somehow, to have locked the door upon dark care and worry, and to have flung the key away—to have lost, at the same time that he lost more precious things, all the fretful doubts and perturbations of the conscience most men know.

Now, in fact, he seemed to have only one serious project in his life. This was to keep himself amused, to keep himself constantly amused, to get from his life somehow the last atom of entertainment it could possibly yield, and in this project the two young men who lived with him joined in with an energy and earnestness which suggested that their employment in the motor-car factory was just a necessary evil which must be borne patiently because it yielded them the means with which to carry on a more important business, the only one in which their lives were interested—the pursuit of pleasure.

And in the way in which they conducted this pursuit, there was an element of deliberate calculation, concentrated earnestness, and focal intensity of purpose that was astounding, grotesque, and unbelievable, and that left in the mind of one who saw it a formidable and disquieting memory because there was in it almost the madness of desperation, the deliberate intent of men to cover up or seek oblivion at any cost of effort from some hideous emptiness of the soul.

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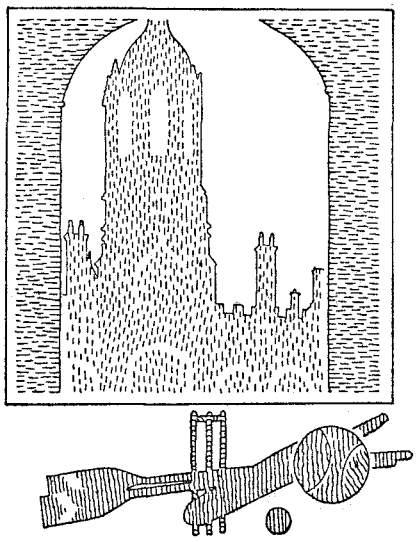

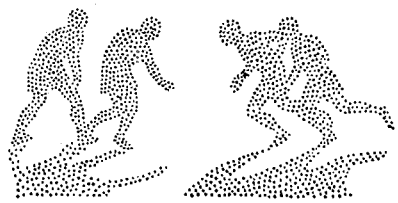

Captain Nicholl and his two young companions had a little motor-car so small that it scuttled up the road, shot around and stopped in the gravel by the door with the abruptness of a wound-up toy. It was astonishing that three men could wedge themselves into this midget of a car, but wedge themselves they did, and used it to the end of its capacity, scuttling away to work in it in the morning, and scuttling back again when work was done, and scuttling away to London every Saturday, as if they were determined to wrest from this small motor, too, the last ounce of pleasure to be got from it.

Finally, Captain Nicholl and his two companions had made up an orchestra among them, and this they played in every night when they got home. One of the young men, who was a tall fellow with blond hair which went back in even corrugated waves across his head as if it had been marcelled, played the piano, the other, who was slight and dark, and had black hair, performed upon a saxophone, and Captain Nicholl himself took turns at thrumming furiously on a banjo, or rattling a tattoo upon the complex arrangement of trap drums, bass drums, and clashing cymbals that surrounded him.

They played nothing but American jazz music or sobbing crooner's rhapsodies or nigger blues. Their performance was astonishing. Although it was contrived solely for their own amusement, they hurled themselves into it with all the industrious earnestness of professional musicians employed by a night-club or a dance hall to furnish dance music for the patrons. The little dark fellow who played the saxophone would bend and weave prayerfully with his grotesque instrument, as the fat gloating notes came from its unctuous throat, and from time to time he would sway in a half circle, or get up and prance forward and back in rhythm to the music as the saxophone players in dance orchestras sometimes do.

Meanwhile the tall blond fellow at the piano would sway and bend above the keys, glancing around from time to time with little nods and smiles as if he were encouraging an orchestra of forty pieces or beaming happily and in an encouraging fashion at a dance floor crowded with paying customers.

While this was going on, Captain Nicholl would be thrumming madly on the strings of a banjo. He kept the instrument gripped somehow below his withered arm, fingering the end strings with his two good fingers, knocking the tune out with his good right hand, and keeping time with a beating foot. Then with a sudden violent movement he would put the banjo down, snatch up the sticks of the trap drum, and begin to rattle out a furious accompaniment, beating the bass drum with his foot meanwhile, and reaching over to smash cymbals, chimes, and metal rings from time to time. He played with a kind of desperate fury, his mouth fixed in a strange set grin, his bright eyes burning with a sharp wild glint of madness.

They sang as they played, bursting suddenly into the refrain of some popular song with the same calculated spontaneity and spurious enthusiasm of the professional orchestra, mouthing the words of Negro blues and jazz with an obvious satisfaction, with an accent which was remarkably good, and yet which had something foreign and inept in it, which made the familiar phrases of American music sound almost as strange in their mouths as if an orchestra of skilful patient Japanese were singing them.

They sang:

"Yes, sir! That's my baby
Yes, sir! Don't mean maybe
Yes, sir! That's my baby now!"

or:

"Oh, it aint gonna rain no more, no more
It aint gonna rain no more"

or:

"I got dose blu-u-ues"—

the young fellow at the piano rolling his eyes around in a ridiculous fashion, and mouthing out the word "blues" extravagantly as he sang it, the little dark fellow bending forward in an unctuous sweep as the note came gloating fatly from the horn, and Captain Nicholl swaying sideways in his chair as he strummed upon the banjo strings, and improvising a mournful accompaniment of his own, somewhat as follows: "I got dose blu-u-ues! Yes, suh! Oh! I got dose blues! Yes, suh! I sure have got 'em—dose blu-u-ues—blu-u-ues—blu-u-ues!"— his mouth never relaxing from its strange fixed grin, nor his eyes from their bright set stare of madness as he swayed and strummed and sang the words that came so strangely from his lips.

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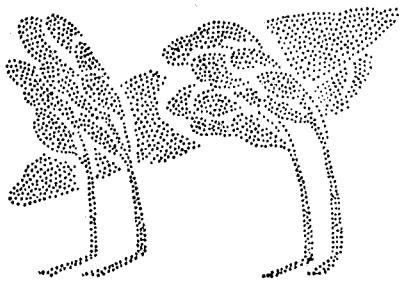

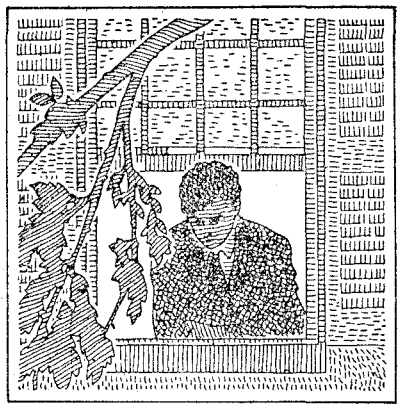

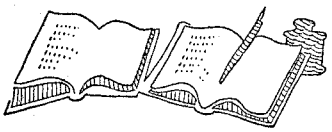

It was a weird scene, an incredible performance, and somehow it pierced the heart with a wild nameless pity, an infinite sorrow and regret.

Something precious, irrecoverable had gone out of them, and they knew it. They fought the emptiness in them with this deliberate, formidable, and mad intensity of a calculated gaiety, a terrifying mimicry of mirth, and the storm wind howled around us in dark trees, and I felt that I had known them forever, and had no words to say to them—and no door.

There were four in the Coulson family: the father, a man of fifty years, the mother, somewhere in the middle forties, a son, and a daughter, Edith, a girl of twenty-two who lived in the house with her parents. I never met the son: he had completed his course at Oxford a year or two before, and had gone down to London where he was now employed. During the time I lived there the son did not come home.

They were a ruined family. How that ruin had fallen on them, what it was, I never knew, for no one ever spoke to me about them. But the sense of their disgrace, of a shameful inexpiable dishonor, for which there was no pardon, from which there could never be redemption, was overwhelming. In the most astonishing way I found out about it right away, and yet I did not know what they had done, and no one ever spoke a word against them.

Rather, the mention of their name brought silence, and in that silence there was something merciless and final, something that belonged to the temper of the country, and that was far more terrible than any open word of scorn, contempt, or bitter judgment could have been, more savage than a million strident, whispering, or abusive tongues could be, because the silence was unarguable, irrevocable, complete, as if a great door had been shut against their lives forever.

Everywhere I went in town, the people knew about them, and said nothing—saying everything—when I spoke their names. I found this final, closed, relentless silence everywhere—in tobacco, wine, and tailor shops, in book stores, food stores, haberdashery stores—wherever I bought anything and gave the clerk the address to which it was to be delivered, they responded instantly with this shut finality of silence, writing the name down gravely, sometimes saying briefly "Oh! Coulson's!" when I gave them the address, but more often saying nothing.

But whether they spoke or simply wrote the name down without a word, there was always this quality of instant recognition, this obdurate, contemptuous finality of silence, as if a door had been shut—a door that could never again be opened. Somehow I disliked them more for this silence than if they had spoken evilly: there was in it something ugly, sly, knowing, and triumphant that was far more evil than any slyly whispering confidence of slander, or any open vituperation of abuse, could be. It seemed somehow to come from all the evil and uncountable small maggotry of the earth, the cautious little hatreds of a million nameless ciphers, each puny, pallid, trivial in himself, but formidable because he added his tiny beetle's ball of dung to the mountainous accumulation of ten million others of his breed.

It was uncanny how these clerk-like faces grave and quiet, that never spoke a word, or gave a sign, or altered their expression by a jot, when I gave them the address, could suddenly be alive with something secret, foul, and sly, could be more closed and secret than a door, and yet instantly reveal the naked, shameful, and iniquitous filth that welled up from some depthless source. I could not phrase it, give a name to it, or even see a certain sign that it was there, no more than I could put my hand upon a wisp of fading smoke, but I always knew when it was there, and somehow when I saw it my heart went hard and cold against the people who revealed it, and turned with warmth and strong affection toward the Coulson family.

There was, finally, among these grave clerk-like faces one face that I could never forget thereafter, a face that seemed to resume into its sly suave surfaces all of the nameless abomination of evil in the world for which I had no name, for which there was no handle I could grasp, no familiar places or edges I could get my hands upon, which slid phantasmally, oilily, and smokily away whenever I tried to get my hands upon it. But it was to haunt my life for years in dreams of hatred, madness, and despair that found no frontal wall for their attack, no word for their vituperation, no door for the shoulder of my hate—an evil world of phantoms, shapes, and whispers that was yet as real as death, as ever-present as man's treachery, but that slid away from me like

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smoke whenever I tried to meet, or curse, or strangle it.

This face was the face of a man in a tailor shop, a fitter there, and I could have battered that foul face into a bloody pulp, distilled the filthy refuse of his ugly life out of his fat swelling neck and through the murderous grip of my fingers if I could only have found a cause, a logic, and an act for doing it. And yet I never saw the man but twice, and briefly, and there had been nothing in his suave, sly careful speech to give offense.

Edith Coulson had sent me to the tailor's shop: I needed a suit and when I asked her where to go to have it made, she had sent me to this place because her brother had his suits made there and liked it. The fitter was a heavy shambling man in his late thirties: he had receding hair, which he brushed back flat in a thick pompadour, yellowish, somewhat bulging eyes, a coarse heavy face, loose-featured, red, and sensual, a sloping meaty jaw, and large discolored buck-teeth which showed unpleasantly in a mouth that was always half open. It was, in fact, the mouth that gave his face its sensual, sly, and ugly look, for a loose and vulgar smile seemed constantly to hover about its thick coarse edges, to be deliberately, slyly restrained, but about to burst at any moment in an open, evil, foully sensual laugh. There was always this ugly suggestion of a loose, corrupt, and evilly jubilant mirth about his mouth, and yet he never laughed or smiled.

The man's speech had this same quality. It was suave and courteous, but even in its most urbane assurances, there was something non-committal, sly, and jeering, something that slid away from you, and was never to be grasped, a quality that was faithless, tricky, and unwholesome. When I came for the final fitting it was obvious that he had done as cheap and shoddy a job as he could do; the suit was vilely botched and skimped, sufficient cloth had not been put into it, and now it was too late to remedy the defect.

Yet, the fitter gravely pulled the vest down till it met the trousers, tugged at the coat, and pulled the thing together where it stayed until I took a breath or moved a muscle, when it would all come apart again, the collar bulging outward from the shoulder, the skimpy coat and vest crawling backward from the trousers, leaving a hiatus of shirt and belly that could not be remedied now by any means.

Then, gravely he would pull the thing together again, and in his suave, yet oily, sly, and non-committal phrases, say:

"Um! Seems to fit you very well."

I was choking with exasperation, and knew that I had been done, because I had foolishly paid them half the bill already, and now knew no way out of it except to lose what I had paid, and get nothing for it, or take the thing, and pay the balance. I was caught in a trap, but even as I jerked at the coat and vest speechlessly, seized my shirt, and thrust the gaping collar in his face, the man said smoothly,

"Um! Yes! The collar. Should think all that will be all right. Still needs a little alteration." He made some chalk marks on me. "Should think you'll find it fits you very well when the tailor makes the alterations."

"When will the suit be ready?"

"Um. Should think you ought to have it by next Tuesday. Yes. I think you'll find it ready by Tuesday."

The sly words slid away from me like oil: there was nothing to pin him to or grasp him by, the yellowed eyes looked casually away and would not look at me, the sensual face was suavely grave, the discolored buck-teeth shone obscenely through the coarse loose mouth, and the suggestion of the foul loose smile was so pronounced now that it seemed that at any moment he would have to turn away with heavy trembling shoulders, and stifle the evil jeering laugh that was welling up in him. But he remained suavely grave and non-committal to the end, and when I asked him if I should come again to try it on, he said, in the same oily tone, never looking at me:

"Um. Shouldn't think that would be necessary. Could have it delivered to you when it's ready. What is your address?"

"The Far-end Farm—it's on the Ventnor Road."

"Oh! Coulson's!" He never altered his expression, but the suggestion of the obscene smile was so pronounced that now it seemed he had to out with it. Instead, he only said:

"Um. Yes. Should think it could be delivered to you there on Tuesday. If you'll just wait a moment I'll ask the tailor."

Gravely, suavely, he took the coat from me and walked back toward the tailor's room with the coat across his arm. In a moment, I heard sly voices whispering, laughing slyly, then the tailor saying:

"Where does he live?"

"Coulson's!" said the fitter chokingly, and now the foul awaited laugh did come—high, wet, slimy, it came out of that loose mouth, and choked and whispered wordlessly, and choked again, and mingled then with the tailor's voice in sly, choking, whispering intimacy, and then gasped faintly, and was silent. When he came out again his coarse face was red and swollen with foul secret merriment, his heavy shoulders trembled slightly, he took out his handkerchief and wiped it once across his loose half-opened mouth, and with that gesture wiped the slime of laughter from his lips. Then he came toward me suave, grave, and courteous, evilly composed, as he said smoothly:

"Should think we'll have that for you by next Tuesday, sir."

"Can the tailor fix it so it's going to fit?"

"Um. Should think you'll find that everything's

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all right. You ought to have it Tuesday afternoon."

He was not looking at me: the yellowish bulging eyes were staring casually, indefinitely, away, and his words again had slid away from me like oil. He could not be touched, approached, or handled: there was nothing to hold him by, he had the impregnability of smoke or a ball of mercury.

As I went out the door, he began to speak to another man in the shop, I heard low words and whispered voices, then, gasping, the word "Coulson's!" and the slimy, choking, smothered laughter as the street door closed behind me. I never saw him again. I never forgot his face.

That was a fine house: the people in it were exiled, lost, and ruined people, and I liked them all. Later, I never knew why I felt so close to them, or remembered them with such warmth and strong affection.

I did not see the Coulsons often and rarely talked to them. Yet I felt as familiar and friendly with them all as if I had known them all my life. The house was wonderful as no other house I had ever known because we all seemed to be living in it together with this strange speechless knowledge, warmth, and familiarity, and yet each was as private, secret, and secure in his own room as if he occupied the house alone.

Coulson himself I saw least of all: we sometimes passed each other going in or out the door, or in the hall: he would grunt "Morning," or "Good Day," in a curt blunt manner, and go on, and yet he always left me with a curious sense of warmth and friendliness. He was a stocky well-set man with iron-gray hair, bushy eyebrows, and a red weathered face which wore the open color of the country on it, but also had the hard dull flush of the steady heavy drinker.

I never saw him drunk, and yet I think that he was never sober: he was one of those men who have drunk themselves past any hope of drunkenness, who are soaked through to the bone with alcohol, saturated, tanned, weathered in it so completely that it could never be distilled out of their blood again. Yet, even in this terrible excess one felt a kind of grim control—the control of a man who is enslaved by the very thing that he controls, the control of the opium eater who cannot leave his drug but measures out his dose with a cold calculation, and finds the limit of his capacity, and stops there, day by day.

But somehow this very sense of control, this blunt ruddy style of the country gentleman which distinguished his speech, his manner, and his dress, made the ruin of his life, the desperate intemperance of drink that smouldered in him like a slow fire, steadily, nakedly apparent. It was as if, having lost everything, he still held grimly to the outer forms of a lost standard, a ruined state, when the inner substance was destroyed.

And it was this way with all of them—with Mrs. Coulson and the girl, as well: their crisp, clipped friendly speech never deviated into intimacy, and never hinted at any melting into confidence and admission. Upon the woman's weathered face there hovered, when she talked, the same faint set grin that Captain Nicholl had, and her eyes were bright and hard, a little mad, impenetrable, as were his. And the girl, although young and very lovely, sometimes had this same look when she greeted any one or paused to talk. In that look there was nothing truculent, bitter, or defiant: it was just the look of three people who had gone down together, and who felt for one another neither bitterness nor hate, but that strange companionship of a common disgrace, from which love has vanished, but which is more secret, silent, and impassively resigned to its fatal unity than love itself could be.

And that hard bright look also said this plainly to the world: "We ask for nothing from you now, we want nothing that you offer us. What is ours is ours, what we are we are, you'll not intrude nor come closer than we let you see!"

Coulson might have been a man who had been dishonored and destroyed by his women, and who took it stolidly, saying nothing, and drank steadily from morning until night, and had nothing for it now but drink and silence and acceptance. Yet I never knew for certain that this was so, it just seemed inescapable, and seemed somehow legible not only in the slow smouldering fire that burned out through his rugged weathered face, but also in the hard bright armor of the women's eyes, the fixed set grin around their lips when they were talking—a grin that was like armor, too. And Morison, who had referred to Coulson, chuckling, as a real "bottle-a-day-man," had added quietly, casually, in his brief, indefinite, but blurted-out suggestiveness of speech:

"I think the old girl's been a bit of a bitch in her day. . . . Don't know, of course, but has the look, hasn't she?" In a moment he said quietly, "Have you talked to the daughter yet?"

"Once or twice. Not for long."

"Ran into a chap at Magdalen other day who knows her," he said casually. "He used to come out here to see her." He glanced swiftly, slyly at me, his face reddening a little with laughter. "Pretty hot, I gather," he said quietly, smiling, and looked away. It was night: the fire burned cheerfully in the grate, the hot coals spurting in small gaseous flares from time to time. The house was very quiet all around us. Outside we could hear the stormy wind in the trees along the road. Morison flicked his cigarette into the fire, poured out a drink of whiskey into a glass, saying as he did so: "I say, old chap, you don't mind if I take a spot of this before I go to bed, do you?" Then he shot some seltzer in the glass, and drank. And I sat there, with-

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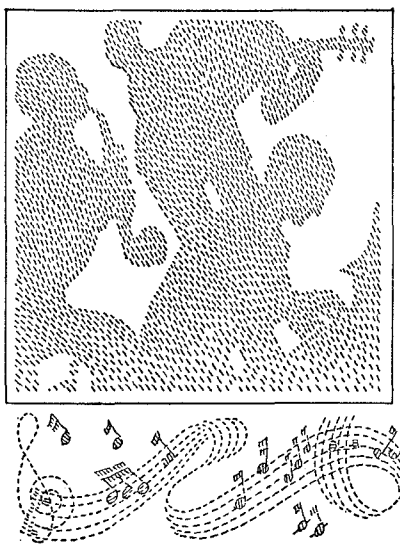

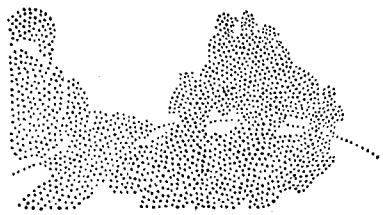

out a word, staring sullenly into the fire, dumbly conscious of the flood of sick pain and horror which the casual foulness of the man's suggestion had aroused, stubbornly trying to deny now that I was thinking of the girl all the time.

One night, as I was coming home along the dark road that went up past the playing field to the house, and that was bordered on each side by grand trees whose branches seemed to hold at night all the mysterious and demented cadences of storm, I came upon her suddenly standing in the shadow of a tree. It was one of the grand wild nights that seemed to come so often in the autumn of that year: the air was full of a fine stinging moisture, not quite rain, and above the stormy branches of the trees I could see the sky, wild, broken, full of scudding clouds through which at times the moon drove in and out with a kind of haggard loneliness. By that faint, wild, and broken light, I could see the small white oval of the girl's face—somehow even more lovely now just because I could not see it plainly. And I could see as well the rough gleaming bark of the tree against which she leaned.

As I approached, I saw her thrust her hand into the pocket of her overcoat, a match flared, and for a moment I saw Edith plainly, the small flower of her face framed in the wavering light as she lowered her head to light her cigarette.

The light went out, I saw the small respiring glow of her cigarette before the white blur of her face, I passed her swiftly, head bent, without speaking, my heart filled with the sense of strangeness and wonder which the family had roused in me.

Then I walked on up the road, muttering to myself. The house was dark when I got there, but when I entered my sitting-room the place was still warmly and softly luminous with the glow of hot coals in the grate. I turned the lights on, shut the door behind me, and hurled several lumps of coal upon the bedded coals. In a moment the fire was blazing and crackling cheerfully, and getting a kind of comfort and satisfaction from this activity, I flung off my coat, went over to the sideboard, poured out a stiff drink of scotch from a bottle there, and coming back to the fire, flung myself into a chair, and began to stare sullenly into the dancing flames.

How long I sat there in this stupor of sullen and nameless fury, I did not know, but I was sharply roused at length by footsteps light and rapid on the gravel, shocked into a start of surprise by a figure that appeared suddenly at one of the French windows that opened directly from my sitting-room to the level sward of velvet lawn before the house.

I peered through the glass for a moment with an astonished stare before I recognized the face of Edith Coulson. I opened the doors at once, she came in quickly, smiling at my surprise, and at the glass which I was holding foolishly, half-raised in my hand.

I continued to look at her with an expression of gape-mouthed astonishment and in a moment became conscious of her smiling glance, the cool sweet assurance of her young voice.

"I say!" she was saying cheerfully. "What a lucky thing to find you up! I came away without any key—I should have had to wake the whole house up—so when I saw your light—" she concluded briskly, "—what luck! I hope you don't mind."

"Why no-o, no," I stammered foolishly, still staring dumbly at her. "No—no-o—not at all," I blundered on. Then suddenly coming to myself with a burst of galvanic energy, I shut the windows, pushed another chair before the fire, and said:

"Won't you sit down and have a drink before you go?"

"Thanks," she said crisply. "I will—yes. What a jolly fire you have." As she talked she took off her coat and hat swiftly and put them on a chair. Her face was flushed and rosy, beaded with small particles of rain, and for a moment she stood before the mirror arranging her hair, which had been tousled by the wind.

The girl was slender, tall, and very lovely with the kind of beauty they have when they are beautiful—a beauty so fresh, fair, and delicate that it seems to be given to just a few of them to compensate for all the grimly weathered ugliness of the rest. Her voice was also lovely, sweet, and musical, and when she talked all the notes of tenderness and love were in it. But she had the same hard bright look in her eye that her mother had, the faint set smile around her mouth: as we stood there talking she was standing very close to me, and I could smell the fragrance of her hair, and felt an intolerable desire to put my hand upon hers and was almost certain she would not draw away. But the hard bright look was in her eye, the faint set smile

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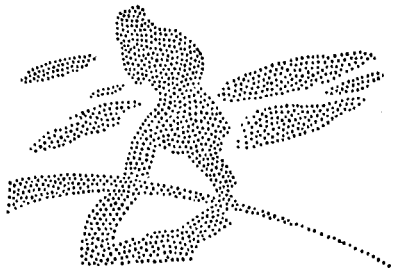

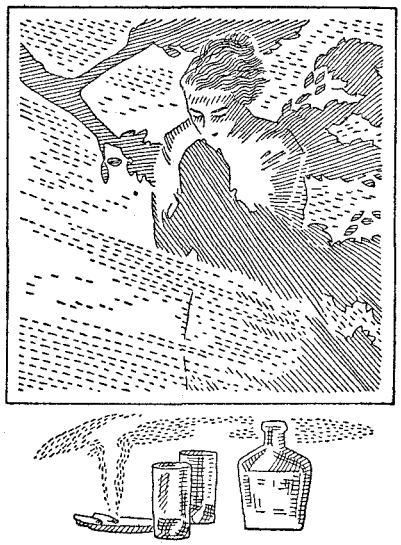

around her mouth, and I did nothing.

"What'll you have?" I said. "Whiskey?"

"Yes, thank you," she said with the same sweet crisp assurance with which she always spoke, "and a splash of soda." I struck a match and held it for her while she lit the cigarette she was holding in her hand, and in a moment returned to her with the drink. Then she sat down, crossed her legs, and for a moment puffed thoughtfully at her cigarette, as she stared into the fire. The storm wind moaned in the great trees along the road, and near the house, and suddenly a swirl of rain and wind struck the windows with a rattling blast. The girl stirred a little in her chair, restlessly, shivered:

"Listen!" she said. "What a night! Horrible weather we have here, isn't it?"

"I don't know. I don't like the fog and rain so well. But this—the way it is tonight—" I nodded toward the window— "I like it."

She looked at me for a moment.

"Oh," she said non-committally. "You do." Then, as she sipped her drink, she looked curiously about the room, her reflective glance finally resting on my table where there was a great stack of the ledgers in which I wrote.

"I say," she cried again. "What are you doing with all those big books there?"

"I write in them."

"Really?" she said, in a surprised tone. "I should think it'd be an awful bother carrying them around when you travel?"

"It is. But it's the best way I've found of keeping what I do together."

"Oh," she said, as before, and continued to stare curiously at me with her fair, lovely young face, the curiously hard, bright, and unrevealing glance of her eye. "I see. . . . But why do you come to such a place as this to write?" she said presently. "Do you like it here?"

"I do. As well as any place I've ever known."

"Oh! . . . I should think a writer would want a different kind of place."

"What kind?"

"Oh—I don't know—Paris—London—some place like that where there is lots of life—people—fun—I should think you'd work better in a place like that."

"I work better here."

"But don't you get awfully fed up sitting in here all day long and writing in those enormous books?"

"I do, yes."

"I should think you would . . . I should think you'd want to get away from it sometime."

"Yes. I do want to—every day—almost all the time."

"Then why don't you?" she said crisply. "Why don't you go off some week-end for a little spree. I should think it'd buck you up no end."

"It would—yes. Where should I go?"

"Oh, Paris, I suppose. . . . Or London! London!" she cried. "London is quite jolly if you know it."

"I'm afraid I don't know it."

"But you've *been* to London," she said in a surprised tone.

"Oh, yes. I lived there for several months."

"Then you know London," she said impatiently. "Of course you do."

"I'm afraid I don't know it very well. I don't know many people there—and after all, that's the thing that counts, isn't it?"

She looked at me curiously for a moment with the faint hard smile around the edges of her lovely mouth.

"—should think that might be arranged," she said with a quiet, an enigmatic humor. Then, more directly, she added: "That shouldn't be difficult at all. Perhaps I could introduce you to some people."

"That would be fine. Do you know many people there?"

"Not many," she said. "I go there—whenever I can." She got up with a swift decisive movement, put her glass down on the mantel and cast her cigarette into the fire. Then she faced me, looking at me with a curiously bold, an almost defiant directness of her hard bright eyes, and she fixed me with this glance for a full moment before she spoke.

"Good-night," she said. "Thanks awfully for letting me in—and for the drink."

"Good-night," I said, and she was gone before I could say more, and I had closed the door behind her, and I could hear her light swift footsteps going down the hall and up the steps. And then there was nothing in the house but sleep and silence, and storm and darkness in the world around me.

Mrs. Coulson came into my room just once or twice while I was there. One morning she came in, spoke crisply and cheerfully, and walked over to the window

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looking out upon the velvet lawn and at the dreary, impenetrable gray of foggy air. Although the room was warm, and there was a good fire burning in the grate, she clasped her arms together as she looked and shivered a little:

"Wretched weather, isn't it?" she said in her crisp tones, her gaunt weathered face and toothy mouth touched by the faint fixed grin as she looked out with her bright hard stare. "Don't you find it frightfully depressing? Most Americans do," she said, getting the sharp disquieting sound into the word.

"Yes. I do, a little. We don't have this kind of weather very often. But this is the time of year you get it here, isn't it? I suppose you're used to it by now?"

"Used to it?" she said crisply turning her hard bright gaze upon me. "Not at all. I've known it all my life but I'll never get used to it. It is a wretched climate."

"Still, you wouldn't feel at home anywhere else, would you? You wouldn't want to live outside of England."

"No?" she said, staring at me with the faint set grin around her toothy mouth. "Why do you think so?"

"Because your home is here."

"My home? My home is where they have fine days, and where the sun is always shining."

"I wouldn't like that. I'd get tired of sunlight all the time. I'd want some gray days and some fog and snow."

"Yes, I suppose you would. But then, you've been used to having fine days all your life, haven't you? With us, it's different. I'm so fed up with fog and rain that I could do without it nicely, thank you, if I never saw it again. . . . I don't think you could ever understand how much the sunlight means to us," she said slowly. She turned, and for a moment looked out the window with her hard bright stare, the faint set grin about her mouth. "Sunlight—warmth—fine days forever! Warmth everywhere—in the earth, the sky, in the lives of the people all around you nothing but warmth and sunlight and fine days!"

"And where would you go to find all that? Does it exist?"

"Oh, of course!" she said crisply and good-naturedly turning to me again. "There's only one place to live—only one country where I want to live."

"Where is that?"

"Italy," she said. "That's my real home. . . . I'd live the rest of my life there if I could." For a moment longer she looked out the window, then turned briskly, saying:

"Why don't you run over to Paris some week-end? After all, it's only seven hours from London: if you left here in the morning you'd be there in time for dinner. It would be a good change for you. I should think a little trip like that would buck you up tremendously."

Her words gave me a wonderful feeling of confidence and hope: I think she had travelled a great deal, and she had the casual, assured way of speaking of a voyage that made it seem very easy, and filled one with a sense of joy and adventure when she spoke about it. When I tried to think of Paris by myself it had seemed very far away and hard to reach: London stood between it and me, and when I thought of the huge smoky web of London, the soft gray skies above me, and the enormous weight of lives that were hidden somewhere in that impenetrable fog, gray desolation and weariness of the spirit filled me. It seemed to me that I must draw each breath of that soft gray air with heavy weary effort, and that every mile of my journey would be a ghastly struggle through some viscous and material substance of soft heavy gray, that weighted down my steps, and filled my heart with desolation.

But when Mrs. Coulson spoke to me about it, suddenly it all seemed wonderfully easy and good. England was magically small, the channel to be taken in a stride, and all the thrill, the joy, the mystery of Paris mine again—the moment that I chose to make it mine.

I looked at her gaunt weathered face, her toothy mouth with the faint fixed grin, the hard bright armor of her eyes, and wondered how anything so clear, so sharp, so crisp, and so incisive could have been shaped and grown underneath these soft and humid skies that numbed me, mind and heart and body, with their thick numb substance of gray weariness and desolation.

A day or two before I left, Edith came into my room one afternoon bearing a tray with tea and jam and buttered bread. I was sitting in my chair before the fire, and had my coat off: when she came in I scrambled to my feet, reached for the coat and started to put it on. In her young crisp voice she told me not to, and put the tray down on the table, saying that the maid was having her afternoon away.

Then for a moment she stood looking at me with her faint and enigmatic smile.

"So you're leaving us?" she said presently.

"Yes. Tomorrow."

"And where will you go from here?" she said.

"To Germany, I think. Just for a short time—two or three weeks."

"And after that?"

"I'm going home."

"Home?"

"Back to America."

"Oh," she said slowly. "I see." In a moment, she added, "We shall miss you."

I wanted to talk to her more than I had ever wanted

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to talk to any one in my life, but when I spoke all that I could say, lamely, muttering, was:

"I'll miss you, too."

"Will you?" She spoke so quietly that I could scarcely hear her. "I wonder for how long?" she said.

"Forever," I said, flushing miserably at the sound of the word, and yet not knowing any other word to say.

The faint hard smile about her mouth was a little deeper when she spoke again.

"Forever? That's a long time, when one is young as you," she said.

"I mean it. I'll never forget you as long as I live."

"We shall remember you," she said quietly. "And I hope you think of us sometime—back here buried, lost, in all the fog and rain and ruin of England. How good it must be to know that you are young in a young country—where nothing that you did yesterday matters very much. How wonderful it must be to know that none of the failure of the past can pull you down—that there will always be another day for you—a new beginning. I wonder if you Americans will ever know how fortunate you are," the girl said.

"And yet you could not leave all this?" I said with a kind of desperate hope. "This old country you've lived in, known all your life. A girl like you could never leave a place like this to live the kind of life we have in America."

"*Couldn't* I?" she said with a quiet, but unmistakable passion of conviction. "There's nothing I'd like better."

I stared at her blindly, dumbly for a moment; suddenly all that I wanted to say, and had not been able to say, found release in a movement of my hands. I gripped her by the shoulders and pulled her to me, and began to plead with her:

"Then why don't you? I'll take you there!—Look here—" my words were crazy and I knew it, but as I spoke them, I believed all I said—"Look here! I haven't got much money—but in America you can make it if you want to! I'm going back there. You come, too—I'll take you when I go!"

She had not tried to free herself; she just stood there passive, unresisting, as I poured that frenzied proposal in her ears. Now, with the same passive and unyielding movement, the bright armor of her young eyes, she stepped away, and stood looking at me silently for a moment, the faint, hard smile at the edges of her mouth. Then slowly, with an almost imperceptible movement, she shook her head. "Oh, you'll forget about us all," she said quietly. "You'll forget about our lives here—buried in fog—and rain—and failure—and defeat."

"Failure and defeat won't last forever."

"Sometimes they do," she said with a quiet finality that froze my heart.

"Not for you—they won't!" I said, and took her by the hand again with desperate entreaty. "Listen to me—" I blundered on incoherently, with the old feeling of nameless shame and horror. "You don't need to tell me what it is—I don't want to know—but whatever it is for you—it doesn't matter—you can get the best of it."

She said nothing, but just looked at me through that hard bright armor of her eyes, the obdurate finality of her smile.

"Good-bye," she said, "I'll not forget you either." She looked at me for a moment curiously before she spoke again. "I wonder," she said slowly, "if you'll ever understand just what it was you did for me by coming here."

"What was it?"

"You opened a door that I thought had been closed forever," she said, "a door that let me look in on a world I thought I should never see again—a new bright world, a new life and a new beginning—for us all. And I thought that was something which would never happen to any one in this house again."

"It will to you," I said, and took her hand again with desperate eagerness. "It can happen to you whenever you want it to. It's yours, I'll swear it to you, if you'll only speak."

She looked at me with her direct hard glance, an almost imperceptible movement of her head.

"I tell you I know what I'm talking about."

Again she shook her head.

"You don't know," she said. "You're young. You're an American. There are some things you'll never be old enough to know.—For some of us there's no return.—Go back," she said, "go back to the life you know—the life you understand—where there can always be a new beginning—a new life."

"And you—" I said dumbly, miserably.

"Good-bye, my dear," she said so low and gently I could scarcely hear her. "Think of me sometime, won't you—I'll not forget you." And before I could speak she kissed me once and was gone, so light and swift that I did not know it, until the door had closed behind her. And for some time, like a man in a stupor, I stood there looking out the window at the gray wet light of England.

The next day I went away, and never saw any of them again, but I could not forget them. Although I had never passed beyond the armor of their hard bright eyes, or breached the wall of their crisp, friendly, and impersonal speech, or found out anything about them, I always thought of them with warmth, with a deep and tender affection, as if I had always known them—as if, somehow, I could have lived with them or made their lives my own if only I had said a word, or turned the handle of a door—a word I never knew, a door I never found.

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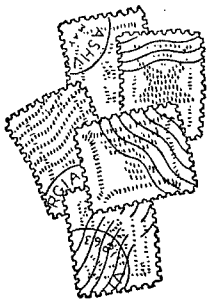
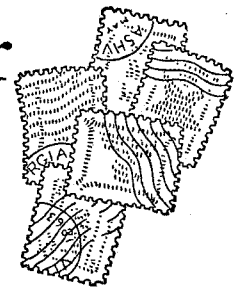


Mating of a Stamp Collector



The story of an ex-Confederate and his progeny
by the Marine Corps author and artist

Capt. John W. Thomason, Jr.

WHEN I return to Texas on such leave of absence as our Headquarters grants after sea or foreign service, I always visit Houston. It is near my home in the eastern part of the State, and more years ago than I care to compute, I worked on one of its great family journals, writing obituaries and such: and I knew many pleasant people in the place, some of whom still remember me. I enjoy seeing them, although the city has expanded beyond all reason, now trailing its embowered residential suburbs across regions where I shot duck and plover in the old time. This saddens me, because everywhere there are too many suburbs and not enough ducks. The other day, I was in Houston, with an afternoon on my hands, and it came to me that I might seek out one Ben James Ray. I consulted the telephone book in a cigar store, and proceeded south on Fannin Street, since it appeared that he occupied offices in a very fine building out that way, one of the creations of the oil empire, recently developed in Texas.

This Ben James is an amiable person of no special talents. We were at the University together in our innocent days, and had in joint commission a canoe on the Colorado River, and courted Tri-Delt sisters. I went into the Marine Corps and he went into the Law School, and we wrote each other letters once a year or less frequently, and saw each other now and again. The last time we met was, I think, when I came back from Cuba in '21; and the last letter I had from him was delivered to me in a steaming place on the East Coast of Nicaragua, when we had that trouble on our hands. I knew vaguely that he had sunk an inheritance in cattle, plunging largely in a year hides fell to eighteen cents, and shoes were twelve dollars; and that the cattle all died, and left him on the munificence of his relatives. There were, I remembered, numerous relatives. Looking at the sun, and calculating how long it would take my smart young sister to finish her shopping, I considered that I had time for a game of chess with Ben James, and a little talk: he is that kind of person. A traffic light held me up—pedestrians observe traffic lights in the progressive town of Houston, and need to observe them—and my eye was drawn by the name of a florist shop on the opposite corner. *"Inez Ray, Florist,"* it said, in fine French script of black, edged with gold. I used to know a girl named Inez Ray, and I rejected firmly the idea of trade in her connection. Then I recalled much mention in homeside letters of hard times during my three years on the Asiatic Station, and people you know losing all; and a girl named Inez was Ben James's cousin, and once, a great deal more than that to me. The light changed, and I crossed, and twisted a bronze handle in a grille. The door opened grudgingly, and a long-boned woman in a black gown was doing something to a vase of roses, her flat back turned to me. I said, "I beg your pardon," taking off my hat. A blonde child with a freckled nose and large ankles, wearing a jade-green smock, attended her.

She turned quickly, saying what sounded like, "The dam' thing's heavy— Oh! It's you—" She did not seem pleased. She said, "I suppose you want some flowers. Well, we have nice flowers. The asters are 'specially good, for this time of the year. May I show you some?" I told her that I'd buy her flowers, and she could send them to my aunt. Then she smiled, and the place, with the winter sunshine of south Texas slanting golden into it, was somehow brighter.

She said, "I didn't mean it that way, Tommie. We've done our fighting, you and I. It just comes over me, seeing you standing there. I wasn't looking for you to

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turn up. The last time I heard of you, you were in Pee-ping—" so she pronounced it— "Is that right?"

I mumbled polite things, observing to myself that she had been refined as in fire. She was always handsome, with the sleek, insolent perfection certain wild animals have. Now there was a hint of human strain, and human anxiety, about her, and a touch of bitterness at the corners of her delicious mouth. But she carried her head gallantly, as I remembered, and her eyebrows were dark and had the sweep of a swallow's wing, and she was a fine, tall girl, with the kind of legs that look well in riding breeches and the very best boots—which is a test. A thought she had burned on her cheek-bones, and she led me around a lattice where our southern smilax was trained as picturesque as ivy, into a tiny office. There were two chairs, and evidences of trade.

"I make it pay," she told me, jerking her thumb at a pile of papers that looked like bills. "But I won't pretend I like it. Tommie, I get up at three o'clock, mornings that I'm buying, to catch the first stuff in the market. Over on Bayou Street at twenty minutes past! The rest of the trade, they get there at four. Forty minutes early—that's my secret of success—such as it is. Out of everything in the world, why did I have to pick the florist business?"

I told her how I recalled, with pain, a preference she used to have for orchids, that you could get only from New Orleans, by special order; I being then on a lieutenant's pay and allowances.

"Oh—you and your pay! But we've had that out. Reach behind you in the corner. Lurline!" The blonde child appeared with glasses, and ice out of the tall, glass-fronted cabinet where the cut flowers kept fresh. I stated, formally, that I was glad to be aboard, and reminded Inez that, in the three years I had been out of the country, there must have been much news I hadn't heard—matters of the first importance. The shop was a nice shop, and the location of the best. But I remembered her as patronizing such places—not running them. Could one ask, howcome?

"Oh, yes, I'll tell you. You remember Granddad, the old major?"

Granddad meant her grandfather, Major Prince Ray. His family were quality folks before the Confederate War. He used a sabre, under Bedford Forrest, earlier than most men use razors. He came home to Texas from Chickamauga, with the casing of a Yankee rifled shell in his body, invalided out of the Provisional Army of the Confederate States. Convalescent, he married his sweetheart and organized road escorts for the passing of cotton into Mexico through Laredo, whereby planters on the Trinity and the Brazos, grown a little doubtful, in 1864, of Confederate Bonds, could sell their stuff for hard yellow money. He was highly paid; and he should have been, trailing great cotton wagons across Texas. When Kirby Smith followed Joe Johnston and General Lee into surrender, the Major was reported to be worth fifty thousand dollars in gold coin—double eagles. Acquisitive, restless, and able, he turned to cattle. The war had demoralized the ranchers, as well as other people, and branded and unbranded stock ran together on the coastal plain. There are whispers, heard to this day where the oldtimers gather, that Major Prince Ray was a little careless about brands. But those were bad years in the South, when a man had to stand on his own legs. He and his hands fought Comanches and rustlers, blue northers and dry spells, over-flows and carpet-bagger politicos, the extreme violence of men and climate; and he imposed his will more often than not. He had a name for meeting force and cunning with more force and deeper cunning, and courtesy with the profound courtesy of an elder time. His judgment of men and animals and weather was sound; and he had luck, and backed it all with driving energy and a boundless audacity. He kept his mind young; and when the open range passed under fences, he shifted to white-faced cattle, more flesh and less bone than the all-weather longhorns; and he prospered where the old-school cattlemen went under. Always ready to risk what he had in any deal, he made and lost two fortunes, and built a third. When he was old, a year of drought dried up his streams, and finally his drinking tanks, and slew his cattle; and he rode thoughtfully one day along the last trickle of water in the creek on his eastern ranch, the air malignant from dead steers, and was intrigued by an iridescence on the lazy water. He wrote to Austin for a geologist, and brought in oil, the first of the shallow Texas fields.

I remember him—for he was a friend of my family's, and I heard of him often and saw him many times: a clean old man, thin as an Indian, and as straight; with thick white hair and a mustache startlingly white against the seamed, poreless texture of a skin burned dark in fierce suns. There was a sardonic humor in his face. His eyes were memorable: pale and hard, under lids thickened and wrinkled from much gazing into the white light and the gritty winds of the cow country. Even then he had lived for nearly ninety years; and he was, I think, terribly lonely for the days that had formed him and the men and women of his own time. The patient lovely girl he married left him sons and daughters, and they in their turn were prolific; but there was not an heir to him in the lot. He had become legendary in Texas, a figure seldom seen; known mainly through the escapades of his grandchildren; but standing for the old days and the old spacious living of the elder South.

I went to school with some of the grandchildren in my generation. They were people of superior parts, un-

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stable, erratic, and, for the most part, worthless. They were utterly spoiled. The Major—hard and driving from the hard ways of his own youth—was soft and lavish where his cubs were concerned. Only one compulsion lay over them: they must make their homes in Texas. They could travel, and go to this school and that one—anywhere in the world—but where the clan lived was the long State between the Sabine River and Old Mexico. He put no other command upon them. Ben James was an aimless and affable fellow reared in a golden shower. Inez, his cousin—this lady in her florist shop—was all the high and gallant things you ever dreamed, and too ornery for human society when the mood was on her. If the Major had schooled his children as he hardened his ponies, or as he conditioned his stock, I think it would have been better for all parties.

"We heard it in Peking, when he died," I told her. "It was in the English-language papers. Pioneer Passes —that sort of thing. Of course I never saw much of him, but I liked to think about him. The world seems to have less in it, now he's dead. By the way, who—did the Depression—" I tried to be delicate about it, but I was very curious. I buried my nose in my glass.

"Did it? Did it!" said Inez with passion. "Listen: it ruined him and it ruined us." She crumpled a cigarette on a tray, savagely. "No, it didn't ruin him. Nothing could touch that man. All his life nothing could touch him. But it certainly smeared us. And I don't think it was entirely our fault. You know how he brought us up—drawing accounts, where we went; and everything we wanted, and the word in the family that we'd all have a million dollars when we came of age!—" I knew: they were talked of in Texas, and the county traffic officers waxed fat on their fines alone, in the first days of automobiles.

"Tommie, we used to say that the only one in the family he ever really cared about was the son that was killed in Cuba, in the Spanish War. I don't remember him; but they say he was like his father. The rest of us —Granddad just tolerated. Nothing we did made any difference to him, one way or another. He'd have us around him—all sorts of family gatherings—you've seen them—like that house-party down at Victoria, when you came back from your war—and I invited you:—what did we fuss about, that time?—and he always seemed to be thinking about things a long way off. We never noticed him getting old. But something happened in his head. He got rid of all his land—he hadn't done much with it since he struck oil, anyway. He sold off all his cattle, and he quit breeding horses and mules right after the war: said there wasn't going to be any market for them until the next war, which he didn't expect to live to see. He said the world staged one big war to a generation, or every twenty-five years, and he'd seen four of them, or about that; and he wouldn't be here for another. He put his money in stocks and bonds. There was a time, my dear, when I didn't know the difference between a stock and a bond, but I know now. Granddad had notions about land taxes and the redistribution of wealth. He talked a lot about them. I wish I'd listened: none of us ever listened to him, except Ben James—the snake!" Here Inez swore dreadfully in the Spanish she learned at Cuernavaca in Old Mexico, before Senator Morrow and Plutarcho Calles made it fashionable, because the Major had liked the place in the days of Porfirio Diaz who was his friend.

"Ben James used to sit and listen to him talk with every appearance of intelligence," resumed Inez bitterly, "Sunday afternoons down on the Bay" (there was a very elaborate summer place at La Porte on Galveston Bay) "and winter days in town, when the old brute assembled us. I've been brought in from lovely house-parties, by Mother and my father. They—" Inez' warm flexible mouth twisted: "disgusting toadies, they were. But I'm not sorry, when I think of them, that they turned their car over on themselves that night. All this would have hurt them so—they couldn't have stood it. Here: you'll drink this or nothing—it goes down easier after the first one.

"Well, he died. He died. They told me he was sitting up talking about Ma Ferguson and the battle of Shiloh and the Diaz *Rurales,* as bright and full of hell as you ever saw—and then he was dead. The funeral was tremendous. Everything was the way he had arranged it. Twelve niggers he named carried the coffin. There was a Confederate flag on it, and his sword. And I believe Uncle Sim—" that was the Major's personal boy, as far back as anybody living could remember— "put his pearl-handled forty-four and his knife and a pair of spurs in the coffin with him—and a pair of dice, maybe. They had a bishop, and the Confederate Veterans, and all sorts of notables, and cow people and oil people and a bunch of early settlers. People you never saw before in your life.

"Afterward, the family gathered for the reading of the will. I'm told that's customary. We sat around in the library, in the house out in Montrose—that some damn oil-king or other is now occupying, and I hope he can't sleep at night—and old Mr. Pandects, looking more like a nice clean sheep than ever, read the will, in muted tones. It was an Occasion. The will was in Granddad's own handwriting. There was a preamble —is that what you call them?—in the name of God, Amen! There followed a list of what he died possessed. Bonds, and stocks, and first mortgages, and that sort of slush. I'm deeply informed on them, now. We discovered immediately that this depression thing was taking hold of the country: we hadn't really noticed it before, although we'd heard talk— There were some

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oil wells—and the National Guard was sitting on them. There were some trusts—all washed up. And some banks—all closed down. And some mortgages on central Texas blackland listed at two hundred dollars an acre—and—as we soon learned—offered at five, with no takers. Don't mind if I get technical, Tommie. I came all the way from Lake Placid in a plane, to be present. I listened, and talked to Mr. Pandects afterward, and that language sank in.

"Of course, each of us was left our share; and along with it, a paragraph telling us off. The family had enough influence to keep the old beast's remarks from getting into the papers. I could repeat you my citation, as the senior granddaughter, word for word, but I won't. And at the last, there was a lovely passage about Ben James. You said you were on your way to see Ben James, didn't you? You always had low tastes." Here Inez appeared to be suppressing feelings of unusual vigor.

The old Major had the reputation of corresponding religiously with his mother and his sweetheart

"I'll tell you what Ben James did. About a month before the Major died, he came around with one of those schemes of his. Ben James could always get money out of the old man. What he needed this time was a moderate advance, in cash; and he said he would then cease to be a drain, because his fortune would be established. You've heard his line of argument. I think the old man indulged him just because it riled the rest of us to watch it. Ben James had a project for cattle—no: that was years ago—gold—oil—bees? That's what it was: Bees in Nicaragua. He went there once on a fruit steamer, and was impressed by the flowers, growing in the winter time. He got his cash and departed from New Orleans, and as it turned out, what he took was practically all the ready money in the estate. Duly noted down in the will, it was, with the provision that it was to be deducted from Ben James's lawful share, as hereinafter set forth. And the old man left Ben James his private papers, because, he wrote, of all the heirs male of his line, Ben James was the only one who showed sincere interest in the family history.

"That will, Tommie, left a definite taste in my mouth. It was two years ago, and the taste is still there. And as long as I live, I'll remember how the family looked, sitting around the room—like buzzards—perfectly turned out buzzards, but buzzards just the same." Inez suffered visibly from corroding thoughts, and I made a diversion. I upset my glass, which was empty, anyway. She collected herself, and went on.

"Ben James came back, when his money ran out. He reported that everything was fine for bees except the weather: It was so wet on the east coast of Nicaragua that the poor bees—very expensive and high-bred English bees—couldn't function. They went out in the mornings and loaded up with pollen; and then it would rain, and they'd get wet, on the way back, and be unable to fly with their loads. They would try to walk home, through the jungles, and it broke them down. Ben James said, if he'd been able to provide his bees with rain coats and galoshes, he could have flooded the world with honey. And he came back to work out the idea of weather-proofing his bees. Anyway, something like that. He seemed to be sorry the old man was dead, and he received the family archives, and stuck them away in a couple of trunks and got a job with an insurance company." She paused, and I did not feel that it was a place for comment.

"That was year before last. He's just rocked along, doing something that can't be very important, in the insurance firm. I can't conceive of any person in his senses trusting Ben James with affairs that matter. Meantime, all the rest of us went into court. I did, myself. Disgusting. But there were a few items here and there that were worth something, and the distribution was spotty. The only people who really made anything were the lawyers. My share, boiled down, set me up in

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this—" she waved a scornful hand at the shop—"and nothing left over. So I've worked. I don't know how the rest of us have made out—and I don't care. But Ben James, he mooned along, playing golf in the afternoons when he was supposed to be rushing around signing people up. Then, last summer, a partnership in his firm becomes vacant, and Ben James considers that, if he buys it in, he can get up later in the mornings—I told you what time I get up, didn't I?—and leave the office earlier, afternoons. And he recollected some old letters the Major wrote when he was escorting cotton from Houston to Laredo, that refer to a lost gold mine in the Pecos country. He digs out these papers, which have been lying peaceful in his trunks, looking for the directions to the gold mine: he meant to go and find it. He didn't turn up that particular letter; but he found something else; the looney!

"At one time or another, Ben James was interested, as he says, in collecting stamps. He still is. He subscribes to these, now, philatelist magazines. And the old Major, when he was off at the Confederate War, wrote a lot of letters home. Some of his letters were stamped with local stamps—you know what I mean?"

As it happened, I knew. The Confederate States of America inaugurated a postal service, with a postmaster general, and patronage attached, and issued stamps, and put out bids for mailbags of suitable design and weight in cotton cloth. But the department never functioned well. It was increasingly disrupted by operations of war, and Yankee invasions, and other sorrows. Mail had to circulate, and cities issued their own stamps, assuming responsibility for the inter-passage of mail from one town to another. Many of the letters, crossing the Mississippi from the eastern armies, came by that means; and the stamps are collectors' prizes today. A Huntsville, Alabama, stamp recently sold for $2400; Anniston, Georgia, $2400; Beaumont, Texas, $2000; Alexandria, Louisiana, $2100, and so on. The list is a long one, and the considerations impressive. The old Major had the reputation of corresponding religiously with his mother and his sweetheart.

"That's it," agreed Inez, bitterly. "Ben James sold his stamps—not enough to glut the market, but enough to buy his partnership. He's the only one in the family now that has anything. If there could be at least one intelligent keeper for him, he'd be fixed for life. . . . Second cousins aren't very close kin," she finished, her voice dropping.

She brooded darkly, and the last sunlight, striking level across the shop, slid a long bar through the whorls of cigarette smoke and lay upon her face. I felt that the occasion called for something. I said that I wished I could help her; she was too nice to have things like that happen to her—up at three in the morning—brawling with the flower merchants, concerning whom no sentimental poems will ever be written—that sort of thing.

She roused herself, and sat straight, and her eyes had a little the look of her grandfather's pale memorable eyes. "You're saying just what all my friends say—that is, the ones who have been around to say anything. I can do something, though. And I've made up my mind to do it. I'll do it right away."

"What?" I asked her.

"Marry Ben James," she said.

THEY WERE WELCOME TO THEIR BELIEF

By Robert Frost

Grief may have thought it was grief.
Care may have thought it was care.
They were welcome to their belief,
The over-confident pair.

No, it took all the snows that clung
To the low roof over his bed,
Beginning when he was young,
To induce the one snow on his head.

But whenever the roof came white,
The head in the dark below
Was a shade less the color of night,
A shade more the color of snow.

Grief may have thought it was grief.
Care may have thought it was care.
But neither one was the thief
Of his raven color of hair.

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Before Going Down

By Nancy Hale

in which a lady encounters a literary lion

THE room was all full of people, with their bare necks and their pink satins, and their brushed hair and their rows of studs, emerald or sapphire or plain gold. Trays of honey-colored cocktails went tinkling round the room, and the prisms under the wall lights tinkled and winked, and there was reaching out of arms with bright bracelets dangling from them; and there were laughing and leaning here and there; stepping forward, bowing, and backing away. It was all gay, and the dinner waited below for the big footmen to come down and serve it and the company to come down and eat it.

And which of all these, she thought, is the great man?

A great man, a poet; the dinner was all in his honor. It was for him that they had lit the candles and stirred the cocktails and put on their satins and their emeralds and their silver slippers. They had all come to be introduced to him and maybe have a not too insignificant word with him, and go away after midnight with the ability thereafter to say, I remember, one night I was dining with Leeds, and he said to me, he said, he said—. Here they stood about, licking their beautiful lips and getting into epigrammatical training with each other over their little tumblers of honey-colored liquor, while all the women conjectured the odds against their being seated next to him at dinner. But which one is he?

She stood backed up against the little marble fireplace and looked for which one should be he. Any one who could bring the tears to my eyes and put sun-spots before them many and many a time I should be able to know at a glance, she thought. For I am not here to be able to go away and say I know Leeds, but because I must see the box from which the music came out. Oh, the vixens, the common dirty Paul Prys, she thought, gabbling round about me: they are going to rub their powdery arms against his wrist at dinner if they get the chance, and tell him his poetry's divine, divahn (having skimmed tastily through it over a cup of tea on the very afternoon). The Thing to Read. The Man to Know. Oh, the dirty vixens, but they smell strong of running!

Nor do I hold myself high, she continued to herself. I'm after him too, to see and to realize, but not to touch or to ogle, I am too good for that, at least. But the tears in the eyes, and the purple and orange sun-spots, and all the lines that have followed me around like long cadaverous hounds, is it unnatural that I should want to see where they all came from? she asked herself kindly. A great man, and he is in the room, and I should know him at a glance. The more joke on me, that I with all my big appreciation and understanding can't tell Leeds from the kit and kaboodle of the other tailcoats in the room.

Would he be the great dark man with the black hair at the back of his neck, that's in such a hurry for his next cocktail? No, he would not. Or the great fair man that's being such a hand with his hostess? Or would he be the little dark man that's talking so much, or the other little dark man, or one of the three by the sofa? I would say no, but what do I want? Does it turn out that I am a sickly wench looking for Rupert Brooke, Shelley, and the angel Gabriel rolled into one? Poets are not wearing haloes and their little blue wings to dinner-parties these days. Very likely he has a crossed eye with a sty in it, and what of it, she thought; if that were to make any difference to me I would be a fine appreciator of poetry. (Is your name George? *No.* Is your name Ethelbert? *No.* Is your name Rumpelstiltskin? *Some witch told you that!*) What do I think I am, psychic, to know a man out of a roomful by the great words he has set down on a separate piece of paper?

It was out of the ruck and the chaos of the satins and serges that the hostess suddenly appeared, dodging out of a small hole in the party like a football player with the ball, urging along the great blond man as a Mohammedan would urge a cow with a pointed stick. All of a sudden she was there, glowing and panting with her triumph, and her hair and her nails and her dress specially done for the occasion.

"And *this* is Leeds!" said she in the sort of tone in

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which long harangues are victoriously concluded. "Leeds! Do you mind if you're too great to be Mister? May I introduce you to Miss Dallow? You two are going to sit next to each other at dinner, if we ever get that far, ha-ha, yes really. Quite an occasion. The most distinguished man and the most beautiful woman. I feel quite. Miss Dallow, such an admirer of your ——, Mr. Leeds—Leeds, rather, and we all know the poet's eye for beauty. Divine. And now I must."

The poor harried woman, who during this discourse had been scattering glances, little pats, about her as incoherently as she scattered her words, now, well-nigh hysterical, dodged off again down her little hole in the crowd to ply it with cocktails and introductions.

Miss Dallow thought she had better not say anything, lest it should be the wrong thing. She looked at the high fair face and reflected on the panic which seized her to say, "Oh, Mr. Leeds, I've read your poetry," which was what she did not want to say. She reflected on the tendency to say small things at great moments. She also thought about the leprosy of saying great things on purpose. She pondered on the great chasm lying between the lowly and coy, and the magnificent and epigrammatical, and supposed that somewhere between lay a few remarks that were not only intelligent but unostentatious. By Heaven, vain as is the flesh, she thought, I will not try to impress this man with my intellect, as no doubt have the rest of the gibbering apes here present. Let me then recollect my province. Let me then try to behave myself and refrain from the word divine. The thing I can do is to look quite nice. The thing he can do is to be a great man.

"The room," he said, and his voice had the high tinkling quality of glass prisms hitting each other, "with all the colors in it, has the look, the arrangement, of an early mosaic. Don't you think so? The discord, the harmony, of color chords."

"Do you like parties?" Miss Dallow asked. She looked carefully at the high fair face, set with light, flat blue eyes and a red mouth.

"Well, parties ought to have a quality about them, something that tastes and that one can scent. It's ridiculous to say that conversation counts for everything, much more lies in the sensual quality achieved by groups. A well-designed party ought to have the composition, symmetry, rhythm, what you will, of any artistic work. Don't you think so? Of course that's my natural point of view. Ahem."

She felt all at once, alarmingly, dropped thirteen floors in an elevator. She wondered if her tipped-up smile had a half-witted curl to it.

"You, for instance," he said in his haughty tinkle, "are very beautiful. You are created to grace. Permit me to say so. The chemical combination of candle-light, your presence, and the obbligato of voices creates something harmonious to the senses. My senses are, of course, peculiarly sensitive. You will remember—'This is ancient moonlight, dead and embalmed in amber, You caught within——' "

"Yes, yes," she said hastily, "I remember that."

"Candle-light," he said, "is the memory of moonlight, just as poetry repeated is the memory of poetry in the creation. The memory of things is sometimes more bearably beautiful than the violence of their actuality. Don't you think so? Proust, you know,——"

"They seem to be going down," Miss Dallow said, and they merged into the push of things moving downward. Leeds continued about memory, and when they turned in to the dining-room door he assisted her with a slight push under the elbow.

All around pink satin was falling into place between black cloth, and white damask napkins fluttered like flags before a battle. The company fell upon their consommé.

"How's the great man?" whispered Miss Dallow's other partner cheerfully as he ate nuts out of a little dish.

She ate a little consommé, hurriedly.

"Oh, let's not talk about that," she said.

RESOLUTE SILENCE

By John Hall Wheelock

In your stern mien I read it, in the high, inflexible air
And resolute silence that the dead
Even for those they have loved are used to wear—
The secret fallen between us, the strange new thing unsaid.

It is evening; the first, tremulous stars come into view
That you praised so well, while I, who watch here caught
In the web you have broken, probe the old secrets we two
Warred on once with the spears of thought.

And it is as if you had deserted, gone over to these
That are leagued in their silence against us. You, too, in the end,
Sealed your lips, and are one now with the unforgiving mysteries—
Who were my friend.

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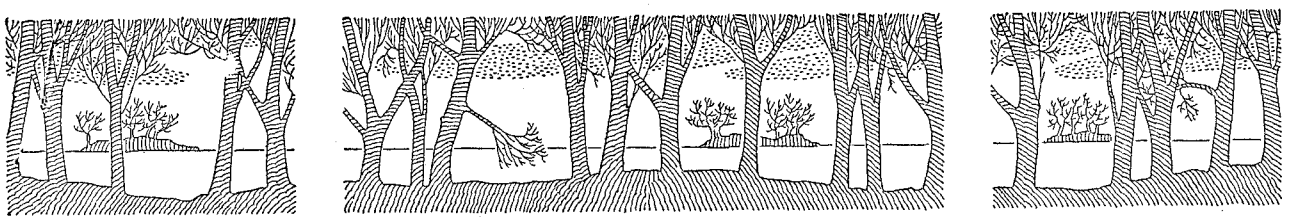
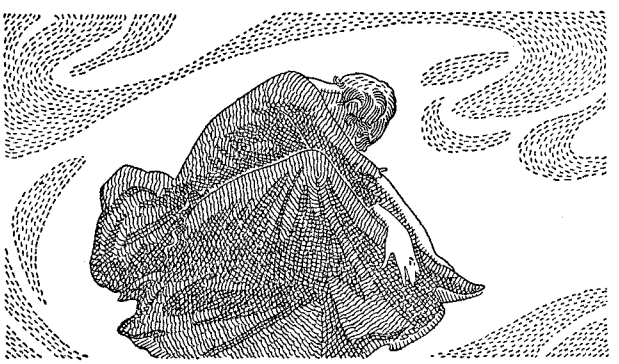


The Dark Shore

Concluding chapters of

James Boyd's Novel of the '80's



XXI

She stopped for a moment in front of her mirror. The gas jets which flanked it were half turned down, but she was content with the dimmer light; it made her look like an old master. The round dark fur cap of otter, pressed down on her forehead, gave her an air at once childlike and wild. Its lower edge melted into the dark line of her eyebrows. She was a young Cossack or a girl of the Stone Age. The steel-gray suit was cut on slender racing lines, and the otter collar, thrown back, showed the bright edge of her chamois vest. In her hand were her beautiful, black skating boots and the shining blades. She raised them up; the blades clicked together. Fitz had given her them last Christmas. Never again with swelling, senseless fingers would she have to fumble at straps and screws and levers.

How well she looked, slender and tall and easy. Her cheeks were delicately but deeply colored. Her mouth and her lean chin were strong enough to carry those ridiculous, great eyes of hers that now peered out under the otter fur like the eyes of an astonished and observant animal. She buttoned up her collar and turned away. She should be ashamed.

But she had not had on her skating things for weeks. She had forgotten how well they became her. It was pardonable to be grateful for such a delightful surprise. And perhaps the picture in the mirror was a prophecy, a charming promise of happiness to come. Surely, as she looked just now, she should be formidable to a rival. A great beauty would, of course, surpass her; but the great beauties were likely, she understood, to be spoiled and silly. Certainly that should count for something.

She sat down on the bed and let the skates hang down between her knees. But did it? Or for that matter, did beauty, or did anything? Her rival, for all she knew, might be grotesque and mean. There was no limit to a man's capacity for self-delusion. There was small credit, when you came to think of it, in holding a man's love. But that was not the question. Who wanted credit? The question was to hold it, merely that.

She brightened. Tonight, amid all that was inscrutable and obscure, there were signs that he was coming back to her.

His door closed overhead. She stood up and took a breath. The skates clicked together. Let her be happy and love him patiently; he was coming back. She almost forgot to turn out the gas.

Her wool-lined arctics made no sound as she went down the stairs. He was standing in the hallway, peering into the dimly lit drawing-room.

"What are you looking for?" she said.

He turned quickly. "Just looking things over," he said. He put on a white knitted skating cap, the one that she had made. "I feel as if I had been away for months. I had forgotten how nice things look."

He took her beaver coat off the hook and held it out for her. She slid into its warm embrace, feeling his hands close over her shoulders. It was hard not to delay. She would have been content simply to stay there in the beaver coat with his hands on her shoulders. She turned and faced him, buttoning up the big fur-tufted buttons, and dropped her chin into the soft beaver. He watched her hands. "Where are your gloves?" he said.

"Oh," she said, "I am stupid. They are in my inside pocket. Never mind. I'll get them when I take my coat off."

"You ought to put them on," he said. "You can't

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walk down to the river with your hands in your pockets. It's too slippery."

She unbuttoned a button and tugged at her pocket. The suede gloves lined with rabbit's fur came out.

"Will you be warm enough?" he said. "What about a muffler?"

"I can't wear another thing. I've got the fur of every animal in the world on me now, poor things. Otter and beaver and my chamois vest, and wool; I suppose that counts as fur."

"And rabbit fur," he said, "inside your gloves, and muskrat outside mine."

"Yes," she said, "and your coonskin coat. Isn't it dreadful? All those animals."

"Yes," he said, "I suppose it is." He put on his coonskin coat. She allowed herself to give a little hoist to the collar. "Thanks," he said, and picked his skates up from the bench.

The night air met them like a solid bulk. She felt the tiny hairs in her nostrils prickle and stiffen. The arc lights glared on the frozen ruts. Beyond the black trunks of the locust trees, the river bank dropped into a black void. Out on the island, the bonfire glowed ruddily and sent a ruddy path across the ice to them. A swift black figure crossed this path and faded into darkness. Around the bonfire, high lights and shadows moved. The crowd was there.

They walked down the street, past the congealed, impassive house fronts and the glow of curtained windows. At the corner, they crossed the roadway and crunched through frozen snow patches to a flight of wooden steps.

"Let me look," he said. "All right. God's in his heaven; some one's put ashes on them."

They stopped on the snowy bank. "Do you think you can see," he said, "to put your skates on?"

"I can in a minute," she said.

He sat down. "Here, sit on the edge of my coat."

She kicked off an arctic, and straining in her swaddlings, stretched forward and thrust her toe into the shoe. Already the leather was cold as iron. The laces slid taut without much help. She wrapped them twice around her ankles and tied them quickly. Then she tucked her hands into the front of her coat against her chamois vest, and kicked her skate-heel against the ground to warm her foot.

"All right," he said, when she had finished, "you get up first. You're on my coat. I'll take your arctics. Look out for that rough ice by the bank."

Holding hands, they crossed the snowy ice with short steps. In the darkness, there were sounds, shouts and a girl who laughed, and the swish of blades; there was the sense of dim, swift figures. The ice smoothed out, they swung together and started up the path of light to the bonfire on the island.

Jeanne Balso swooped at them; her fur-trimmed skirt was flattened in the wind; she poised like a tightrope walker and came curving up beside them.

"Hello, Clara," she said. "Good for you."

"Hello, Jeanne," Fitz-Greene said.

"Hello," she said, "you're back."

"He just got back tonight," Clara said, "and here he is. How's that for the sporting instinct?"

"You're being asked to admire me, Jeanne," Fitz-Greene said, "but you needn't answer." He skated on ahead.

"Is everybody here?" Clara said.

"Yes," Jeanne said. "And guess who's here. Anna Lyle."

"Anna Lyle! Why, I didn't know she skated."

"Neither did Ellen," said Jeanne. "She's so disappointed." She gave a deep, sweet laugh.

Mr. Johnson, his elbows neatly crooked, was gliding slowly backward on one foot. His other toe was pointed out behind him. The firelight shone on his eyeglasses.

"Hello," Clara called out.

"How do you do?" he answered, absently.

"Clara is the name," Jeanne called.

"Mrs. Rankin," he murmured.

"He goes into a trance," Jeanne said, "when he does that backward roll. I have had to put Mun off the ice."

"My goodness! What's Mun doing here?"

"He kept coming out with little straws and putting them down on the ice behind Johnny when he wasn't looking. Johnny would have killed him, if he had found out what it was."

"But what's Mun doing here?"

"I told him I'd give him a kiss if he'd come on the party. Poor Mun!"

"Why; aren't you going to do it?"

"Oh, yes, but he's already decided that it isn't worth it. Look at him."

Utterly withdrawn into his many wraps, Mun stood beside the fire. Only his pale, dejected eyes showed between the swathings of his muffler and his ridiculous toboggan cap. Beside him, rocking on her skates, Big Sister boomed and slammed her hands together.

On the bank, Fitz-Greene rolled their arctics into his coonskin coat. Good Doggie, skating furiously with Ellen, dashed out of the darkness. In a spurt of ice, he stopped, spread-legged. Ellen spun like a top. Her feet flew up. Calmly, Good Doggie clasped her to his bosom, and set her down.

"Hello, Clara," he said, "why didn't you come sooner? Did they tell you about the ice?"

"No," she said, "what?"

"Don't go between the islands," he said, "the rest of the river's all right." His mackinaw, too tight for him, made his legs look immensely long. His shadow,

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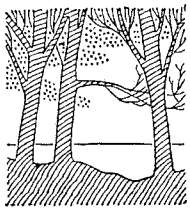

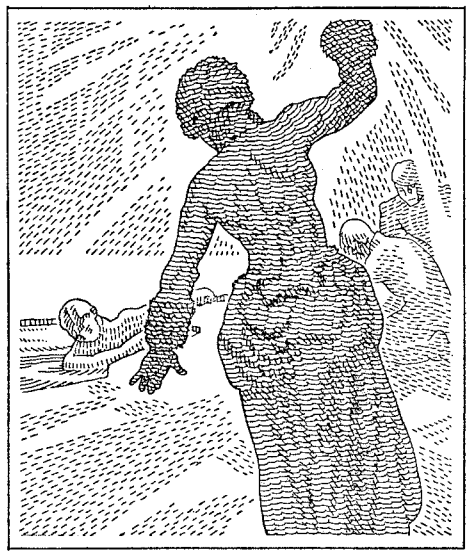

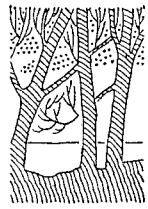

stretching across the ice, was lost in the darkness.

Fitz-Greene glided up. "I'll take your coat," he said. "Hello, Doggie, hello, Ellen."

"Let's crack the whip," Doggie said.

"We'll get warm first," they said. "Yes," they said, "let's." They stood in a row and spread their hands behind them to the fire.

A figure came out of the darkness into the first dim zone of the fire's light, a stout little man in a derby hat and ear-muffs. His old-fashioned Dutch skates curled over the toes. With slow scuttling strokes and a chopping swing of arms he wound his way toward them among their long, tangled shadows on the ice. His frosted mustache curled over a scrubby chin. He toed in, bandy-legged, and came to a scraping halt. "Hello, fellows," he said. He blew on his hands and stuffed them inside the waistband of his trousers.

"Hello," they said.

He looked at them, alert and impassive. "Got a fire, I see."

"Yes," they said. "Do you want to get warm?"

"Me? No." He undulated in order to ease his hands inside his waistband. "Pretty good ice tonight."

"Yes," they said. "It's lovely."

"Yes," he said. "It's all right. Who's that fellow cutting capers out there?"

"His name is Johnson."

"Johnson, eh? He's all right. Say, you need more wood, don't you?"

"I suppose we will," Good Doggie said. "There's lots of driftwood on the island."

The stout little man skated away into the night.

"Who's your friend, Jeanne?" said Ellen.

"He's not mine," Jeanne said. "He's Mun's; from the Union League in Philadelphia."

Mun's muffled eyes gave her a baleful look.

Mr. Johnson sailed slowly up. "Good evening, Mrs. Rankin. Hello, Fitz," he said. He rocked up on his toes and stepped up the bank to the fire.

"Hello, there," Fitz-Greene said. "How are you?"

"I'm finely, thank you." He held out his hands to the blaze.

"Cold?" Big Sister said. "I guess it's cold work, that fancy stuff."

Mr. Johnson withdrew his muffled hands. "Not at all," he said. "There's more to figure skating than you would suppose."

"I guess it's pretty hard work, really," Big Sister said.

Mr. Johnson looked at her. "No, not that," he said. "Miss Jeanne, would you like to skate?"

"I want to get warm," Jeanne said. "You skate with Ellen."

"That would be a pleasure," Mr. Johnson said, with great reluctance. He stepped down on the ice.

"I'm sure you don't want to," Ellen said.

"Oh, but I do." They moved off sedately.

A muffled voice came from Mun's muffled figure. "A woman's intuition." He sank his head lower into his muffler and watched his sister out of sight.

"Hello," Jeanne said. "Here comes Hans Brinker."

The stout little man came back with a large armful of driftwood. "Here," he said, "I guess this is what you need. Give me some room now. Look out, I'm going to throw it down. Look out there, ladies." He crouched over the fire. "What you need is a couple of real good logs set together like." He looked up at Mun. "Say, fellow," he said, "you ain't doing nothing. How about you and me getting a couple of logs? There's some at the end of the island."

Mun rolled his eyes at him. "I haven't got skates," he said, "and I'm going home."

The man in the derby hat stood up. "No skates?" he said. "Well, that's the heck of a thing. I got an extra pair at home, if I'd knowed."

"Come on," Fitz-Greene said. "I'll help you get those logs." They disappeared together, Fitz-Greene with long sweeping strokes, the little man working his elbows and industriously scuffling his curved Dutch skates.

"You see," Jeanne said. "He's in the Union League. They always lend each other skates." She tip-toed up to Mun and threw her arms about him dramatically. "Now you can go home," she said.

Mun shook off Jeanne with dignity. "I'll go home when I want to," he said.

Unrebuffed, she took his arm. "No, but really, Mun, it's silly. Come along with me. I'll go over to the bank with you."

"I don't need help," Mun said.

"I know you don't, silly. I just meant for company.

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If you don't, I'll go home by myself, right now. Really, I will."

"Come on, Mun," they said. "We are all going home soon, now."

Mun was led down the bank. With Jeanne gliding slowly beside him, his muffled figure moved with short and apprehensive steps across the ice. Good Doggie moved away from the fire.

"Doggie," said Big Sister, instantly alert, "let him alone now." Her ankles bent as she made a clutch at him. "Doggie!"

Swinging his long arms, Doggie vanished. They heard his long, deep whoop and Mun's exasperated curses. Jeanne Balso called out fiercely, "Doggie, you ass. I'll kick you with my skate." With long, trailing whoops, Good Doggie skated furiously away.

Fitz-Greene and Hans Brinker came back heaving two short, stout logs between them. "All right," the little man said. "Set still, ladies. We'll make this fire up good." He squatted down and poked the fire together with a stick. Without looking up, he held out a hand. "All right, Fitz, let's have one of them logs. The great thing in a fire," he said, "is a couple of good stout logs. With that old fire," he said, "we'd have been carrying trash all night, and then we wouldn't have had nothing." He held out his hand for the other log. He was strong as a little ox. He stood up, dusting his hands together, his face red, his black eyes bright. "Now," he said, "we're fixed." He blew through his frosted mustache and threw a glance at Clara. "You're his wife, I suppose? Thought so." He looked at Big Sister. "Lady, I ain't seen you stirring around much."

Big Sister grinned at him. "I'm a poor skater."

"Aw," he said, "come on. I'll show you how. There's nothing to it."

"I don't know," Big Sister said. "I fall down."

He bent his arm. "Feel that," he said.

"Yes," Big Sister said, "you've got the muscle."

"You bet," he said. "Come on." Big Sister continued to grin at him under beetling brows, but made no move. "Look here," he said, "I'm a widower, I live with my married daughter, and I guess you'd call me pretty settled in my ways." He held out his hands and led her stumbling across the ice.

The fire shot up between the logs, shone on high, overhanging branches and then was lost. It touched the nearest tree trunks and laid a circle of light out on the ice. Its brightness blanketed the stars. Fitz-Greene and Clara seemed to sit in a small cave of light, hollowed out of the night. Through the darkness shadows fled with faint, slicing sounds of speed; but they were of another world. She and Fitz-Greene sat in the cave of light, warm, sheltered and alone.

"I thought you said there was a moon," he said.

"I'm afraid I did. Are you disappointed?"

"No, I like this better."

Ellen and Mr. Johnson crossed the path of light. They were stopping, turning, coming to the fire. No, they kept on. They swayed together into the darkness. She and Fitz-Greene were again alone.

She stared into the night, thinking, "We are here together and alone. I did not expect that much when we came skating." Now he was looking at her, studious and intent. But she would not take any notice. That would be best. All in good time. Be steady.

"You should always keep that dress," he said.

She laughed and raised a mitten to her face. "It's worn already." She stretched an arm out. "Look at the fur around the wrist."

"Then you should get another," he said. "The cap will last."

"Yes," she said. "I suppose it will last all my life."

"Ah," he said. "I hope so."

"But I can't go on dressing the same forever," she said.

"Why not?"

"Well, it would be too unoriginal."

"Who else does it?" he said. "It would be original." He took her wrist, examined the fur, his head bent. He brushed the dark fur with his fingers.

"You must always have a dress like this." he said.

"You know," she said, "it's quite an idea. If every one did it, it would be interesting. A tremendous jumble. Crinolines, and manteaux and riding habits, and fancy dress costumes, I suppose, all mixed up together, whatever in each one's whole life had looked the best. But then when we got together—" She was staring at the ice, picturing the motley gathering, the astonished gentlemen. She heard him jump up.

"Some one's coming." He was urgent. Their hands were together, they were swinging into the darkness. Behind her, she heard George's voice. "Hi! . . . Clara!" She felt Fitz-Greene stride out and swung herself with him. "Hello, George!" she called. Her voice was snatched away.

Their long distorted shadows swayed in front of them, reducing the charm of their two figures to slightly sinister absurdity. The darkness closed behind them, the ice, mere phosphorescent flecks and scratches on a bottomless black floor, seemed to slope away. Their blades bit in together and came up faintly ringing. The white flecks flew under them, the black vault and the stars, now dimly felt, turned above.

With their momentum, they gained rhythm. They no longer seemed to skate. There was no act, no volition. Their light, firm clasping hands and bending bodies swung in a rhythm, easy, light and free, yet perfected and inviolable, a rhythm which, creating first itself, went on to create more, so that they flew without thought, weight or effort, caught up, sustained and

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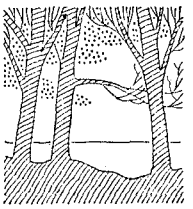


carried by the magic flowing from their swaying hands. Ruddy house lights from the river bank swung in their distant orbit, faint sleigh bells mingled with the wind of their speed. Stars, sharp and reserved in the great cold night, touched the immediate ice with misty silver that ran ahead of them. The world was turning under them. They felt the roll of that gigantic ball.

The etchings on the ice were few, not many skaters had been down as far. "Fitz." She had almost to shout. "Do you think we ought to go here?"

"What?" he said.

"Do you think we've gone too far?"

"We're all right," he said.

He must know. Or if not, they were together and flying fast.

The lights of town were left behind. There were no skate marks on the ice. They swam over perfect blackness. No marks of man; no lights on shore. Only the night and the ice. They flew.

His hands broke the beat. They stood up, rigid, and swung a circle. Then they stopped.

"No one has ever skated here before," he said.

"I know," she said. "No one." She felt the vapor of her voice against her cheek. "It feels different," she said. " 'We were the first that ever burst.' "

He gave her hand a shaking. "It must be tantalizing," he said, "to have a great fund of inappropriate quotations."

"Well," she said, "you know the feeling."

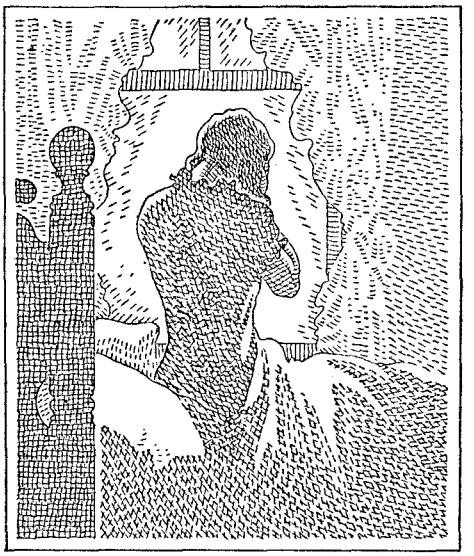
He held her hands against him, peering down at her in the night, his face dark beneath his white-knitted cap. "Let's go back," he said. "This was a foolish thing to do."

"Yes," she said, contentedly. "I suppose it was. But it's only bad between the islands, I guess." He did not answer. "Doggie says there's an air-hole between the islands," she said. "Where the current runs."

He held out his hands. They struck out together. The journey back was not so swift. They met their skate marks—made just now. The ice, then, and the night were no longer quite the same. They had been here before and left their trail, spoiling the new ice by that, even for themselves.

They could see the others gathered around the fire. The little man in the derby threw on sticks. The flames blazed up and showed George's square figure and Anna Lyle, looking cold and white beside the fire.

Good Doggie left the fire and came flailing down to them. He made an awkward, rapid turn alongside. "Hello, where've you been? We want to crack the whip."



"Oh, Doggie, I couldn't just yet," she said. "I'm tired."

"Well, then, let's have a little skate."

"Oh, I don't think I could," she said. "We've been miles."

"Just a little skate," Doggie said.

"Well," she said, "I'll skate just back to the lower end of the island, then."

Good Doggie's big hands seized hers.

"Yes," Fitz-Greene said, "then come back to the fire."

Good Doggie lunged out. She looked back as she flew away. "I will," she called. He stood still in the dimness of the firelight's edge, looking after her.

XXII

She let Doggie propel her down the dark, wooded shore marked by the faint white gleam of snowy banks. It was useless to try to follow his powerful, ill-judged thrusts. She allowed herself to be jerked along. This was a very different kind of skating; but it would soon be over. The island ended here. Doggie stopped, pigeon-toed, and swung her around. Unflagging, he toiled back toward the firelight. Was it a mistake to have come with him? What thoughts had beeen in Fitz-Greene's mind as he stood looking after her? But he seemed pleased to have her go. He was never one for petty jealousy, even when he—even before. He had been proud of any least attention to her, had taken it to himself as well as to her for a well-deserved compliment. "I'd make the ideal cuckold," he'd once observed. She remembered that he had been a trifle disappointed at having to explain the meaning of the word. And she must not seem to hang upon him. For he was coming back.

There was the fire. Good Doggie put on a burst. The speed was not great, but the sense of power was enor-

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mous. It was like being caught up in some great aimless convulsion of nature.

Good Doggie rushed upon the group around the fire. There was a resigned scattering. Big Sister scuttled with furious, fixed eye, Jeanne Balso raised her fists defensively. Good Doggie lunged up on the bank. The group re-formed. The little man looked up from the fire. "Hey, fellow," he said, "look out how you do. You'll scare the ladies."

"How are you making out?" Good Doggie said. "Do you need any wood?"

"No," the little man said. "That fellow Fitz and me, we got plenty." With a stick, he shepherded a coal back into the fire. Clara sat down beside him on Fitz-Greene's coonskin coat. Across the fire, Anna Lyle, looking fragile and bizarre in white wool skirt and jacket, was talking to Ellen. Ellen was probably trying to persuade her to sing the Mad Song from "Lucia di Lammermoor." An industrious and resourceful fighter for her rights, was Ellen. Below them, Jeanne Balso had sat up, and was paying no attention to a long discourse of Mr. Johnson's. She was probably trying to hear what Ellen was saying. George, draped in his coonskin coat, stood on the ice. He took a stout cigar from his mouth and looked at it.

"Didn't you hear me holler?" he said.

"Yes," Clara said. "I called back, but Fitz wouldn't stop."

George put his cigar in his mouth. "Doggie," he said, "have a cigar?"

"No, thanks," Doggie said. "We're going to crack the whip as soon as Clara gets warm."

"We ought to wait for Fitz," Clara said. "He loves it."

Doggie was gruff. "He'll come when he hears us start." He was a man to be put off no longer from his project.

The little man squatted down on his heels. "Well," he said, "did you have a good skate?"

"Oh, yes," she said. "We just went to the end of the island."

"I mean the first time, with him."

"With my husband? Oh, yes."

"He skates awful good," he said, "and so do you, too."

"Well," she said, "we've skated a lot together."

"I'm always glad when winter comes," he said, "then I can skate. My daughter says that if we had winter the year round, I'd be the easiest man in the world to live with."

"I guess you're pretty easy, anyhow."

"Well, in the summer, I get kind of restless, now that I don't work no more. I fool around with a truck patch in the back yard, but it don't seem like I could take no interest in it. I do pretty good with it, too. Sometimes, I think maybe I'll get a job again. I don't have to work, though."

"What did you use to do?"

"When I quit, I was a trimmer in the rolling mill. I've had other good jobs, too. Never lost a job in my life; walked out on them, but never was fired. I guess not everybody can say that."

"No, I guess not. You must be a pretty good workman."

"The whole thing," he said, "is for a man to learn a job and then to do it. If a man will do that, he don't never need to look for work." He added two sticks to the fire. "If a man will take some satisfaction and interest in his work, he will be all right. I guess that's what I miss since I quit."

"Yes," she said, "I suppose every man that amounts to anything is lost without a job."

"That's a fact," he said. "What's he do?"

"Who? My husband? He's in the wholesale hardware business."

"Well," he said, "I guess that's a pretty good job. There ought to be money in that."

"I think there must be some," she said. "He doesn't tell me much about it, but he seems to be making out all right."

The little man brought out a small white ball of handkerchief from his hip pocket, and rubbed his nose hard. "That's a smart fellow, and awful nice. Took a fancy to him, right off."

"I think he's nice."

The little man concentrated on injecting the handkerchief into the pocket of his skin-tight trousers. "Yes, sir," he murmured, "he's all right."

Good Doggie stamped his skates on the ice. "Now then, what about it?"

They rose stiffly and reluctantly, Mr. Johnson held out a hand to Jeanne, who got up without it. "What about Fitz-Greene?" he said. "We need him for an anchor."

"He'll be along," said Doggie.

The little man stood up. "Here," he nodded at Good Doggie, "let this big fellow be the anchor and me come next." He clumped down toward the ice. "We'll swing them."

George threw his coat on the ice. "All right. We'll put Big Sister at the end."

"You will not," Big Sister said. "I go on the inside, or I don't go."

"Why, lady," said the little man, "you were doing fine out there. Just keep your ankles stiff-like. You're all right."

"Come on, Clara," Jeanne said. "We'll take Big Sister between us."

Mr. Johnson took off his eye-glasses and snapped them into their case. He smiled jauntily to conceal his opinion of this form of sport.

Continued on page 113

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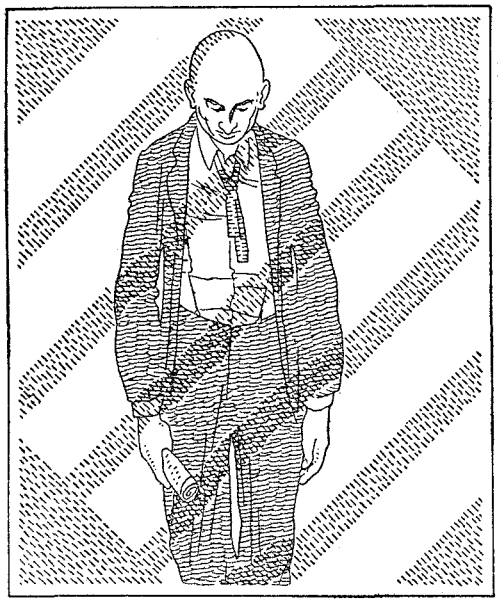
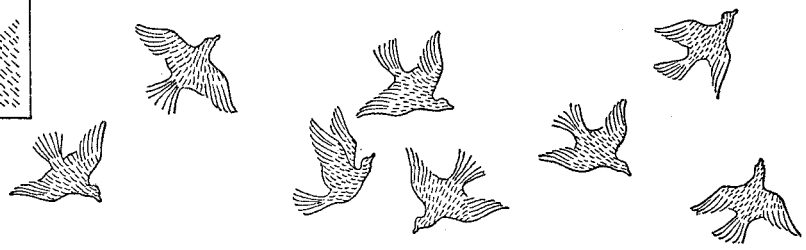


The Pardon

A story by the author of "South Moon Under"

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings



A DRIFT of small hard leaves clicked from the live oak at the main gate of the penitentiary. The man Adams looked at the sky and turned up the collar of his misfit coat. Then he turned it down again, with the uncertainty of a man for whom decisions have been made too long. The sky was gray, mottled with the harsh blue of November.

A guard at the gate said, "Don't forget anything. It's unlucky to turn back."

The trusties clustered at the gatehouse made a clatter of thin laughter.

A man serving a life sentence said, "It's more unlucky, turning in—" and they laughed again, with the sound of men applauding from a distance.

Adams put his hand inside his coat and touched the sharp edge of parchment paper that was the pardon. He wanted to show it. His fumbling was ignored and he let his hand drop at his side.

He said, "Well, so long."

The guard answered indifferently, "So long," and spat into the sand. The group was silent; immobile; understanding the futility of speech or movement.

Adams shuffled into the roadway and searched the line of parked cars of visitors. A woman fluttered toward him and retreated to the protection of an open Ford. She lifted a hand, entrenched on the far side of the high hood.

He called "Emma!" and moved his feet faster, his pulse thick in his throat.

He saw that it was Joe Porter at the wheel of the Ford.

He said, "Hey, Joe."

Joe said, "Hey," and absorbed himself with the gears.

Adams turned to the woman.

He said, "Hey, wife."

She looked at him. He thought that he had never before noticed how much she looked like a rabbit. When he had worked on the penitentiary farm they had killed dozens of rabbits. They sat staring with frightened eyes and trembling noses, pretending not to be seen.

He asked, "Where's the two young uns?"

She said, belligerently, "I didn't see fitten to carry 'em. I ain't never yet carried 'em here."

"No," he said.

He hesitated between the front seat and the back, and climbed stiffly into the back. The woman licked her lips.

She said, "I reckon you'll be glad of the room," and stepped into the front seat beside Joe Porter.

Joe said, "First chance in seven years to spread hisself, eh, Emma?"

Adams stared at the back of his wife's neck. It was plump, with the hair dark and low-growing.

The Ford lurched in the deep ruts of the sand road leading away from the penitentiary. Adams bounced on the worn springs, holding his black felt hat with one hand against the wind that whipped through the rear of the car. It seemed to him that he was moving with incredible speed. The prison farm trailed out of sight; the nursery telescoping into the dairy farm; the dairy farm into the hog pasture; the hog pasture into the open fields; the fields, at last, beyond the bridge, into pine woods.

Nine miles beyond the penitentiary the Ford left the dirt road and ran smoothly along a paved highway. The pine forest appeared to march, closing its ranks, filling in its shadowy spaces with its own dark members. He abandoned himself to the motion. He felt as he had once done under the influence of gas in the prison hospital. He was conscious of a rush of blood in his body, of wind in his ears, of an increasing numbness; conscious of a darkness on either side of him through which he passed, hour after hour, without effort or volition of his own.

Joe said to Emma, "It'll be dusk dark, time we get him home."

Adams stirred uneasily. He felt like a sack of mule feed, or a hog's carcass. He wanted to call to Joe above the wind, to apologize, to transform himself into a sentient being. He hunched forward, gripping the front seat with his fingers. No one noticed him and he could not think of anything to say. He leaned back and the pardon creaked inside his pocket. His heart jumped with relief, as though he were a child, forgetting its recitation on the school platform, who had been prompted.

He shouted, "I didn't some way never figure I'd get a pardon."

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There was no answer. He thought he had not been heard. Then he wondered in a panic whether he had actually spoken. He may only, as he had so often, have imagined his voice in loud clear speech.

Joe said, "Didn't nobody else figure so, neither."

The car began to pass through towns he knew. Near Busby marsh, turtle doves in a flock hurled themselves toward the night's watering place. Their under-bodies were rosy, facing the west. Then they passed into the sunset and were at once black, as though charred to a crisp by its heatless fire. The doves wheeled and could be seen plunging to the marsh edge.

Adams called out, "We been having them things by the hundreds in the chufa fields. You got chufas this year, Emma?"

She turned her head half-way across her shoulder and shook it briefly.

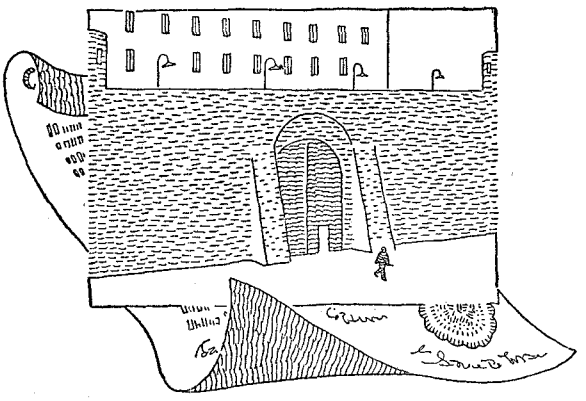
Joe said, "She can't raise nothing hardly, for other folks' hogs. Rooting and rambling. Them fences you left wasn't none too good when you left 'em. I've mended parts of 'em."

She added, "Joe put new brick to the old chimney for me. I couldn't scarcely have managed."

The Ford left the highway for the sand road that led through Busby flat woods to the farm. The wind was high. It lashed the flexible boughs of the pine trees and they flailed the car top. Adams recognized landmarks; an abandoned cattle pen; a sink-hole; the pond where his hogs had always watered. Yet the house moved unexpectedly into sight around the familiar bend, standing suddenly small and smoke-gray in the November twilight.

The Ford stopped outside the gate. The chinaberry tree in the yard had grown higher than the house, and in the silence of the car's halting, its gaunt branches scraped the bricks of the chimney. Adams passed through the gate and took a few steps up the path. The place seemed uninhabited; not his home, but merely a place he had remembered. He waited for Joe and Emma, lagging behind when the woman lifted the shoestring latch and pushed open the door.

At first the large kitchen appeared empty. He blinked. An oak fire glowed dull in the range. He searched the darkness. There was a stirring in the dusk in the far corner. The faces of two children took shape, their eyes wide and glinting.



Adams called across the room, "It ain't Quincie and Lila, is it?"

Joe said, "Ain't either of you girls big enough to get the lamp going without somebody should come home and light it for you?"

Emma said, "Hush up, Joe. I'll light it. Go fetch me an armful of wood. You girls come speak to your father."

The girls moved woodenly into the light of the swinging kerosene lamp. They too, he thought, looked like rabbits, small-mouthed and frightened. They had grown tall and thin.

He questioned, "Quincie, that you with them longest legs? Let's see—I been away seven years—you must be thirteen. Lila? You about ten——"

He held out one hand toward them. They did not move.

Emma called, "Start the bacon, Quincie. We'll never be done."

Adams stood in the middle of the floor. The bustle of supper-making stirred about him. Joe returned by the back door, dropping wood in the box with a clatter. He washed his hands in the basin on the water shelf and combed his thick hair with a comb he took from behind the mirror.

He called to Adams, "Set down, man."

Emma said sharply, "Let him come wash first. He's got that jail house smell."

Adams flushed.

"We all kept mighty clean up there," he said. "We had running water. My clothes is all clean."

Joe dilated his nostrils, testing the air with relish.

"It's the disinfectant they use in them places," he said.

Adams moved to the water shelf and washed his face and hands carefully. He dampened an end of the towel and rubbed it inside his collar. He smoothed his hair with his hands and edged into a chair at the long table against the wall. His wife leaned over him to place a plate of cold biscuits. He caught at a fold of her skirt as she moved away.

He said playfully, "Don't make company of me in my own house, Emma."

The thin girls gaped at him. He was uncomfortable, as though he had tried to make a joke in church. Emma brought hot dishes from the stove. She stood looking at the table, and pushed back a forelock of hair. The gesture made her in an instant his wife again. He remembered teasing her about it, telling her she would wear herself bald-headed. He had seen her lie in bed beside him, her hair braided neatly for the night, and lift her hand to brush back that very soft dark forelock. A sharp sweetness struck through him.

A rap sounded on the door. Voices lifted, and the near neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Mobbley, came noisily into the kitchen. Adams jerked from his chair to shake hands. He was pleased and proud that they had come to see him on his first night at home.

Emma said in a low voice, "Fetch Jackie," and in the confusion the older girl went out of the room, returning with a child of four, rubbing his eyes from sleep. Adams glanced at him vaguely, turning back to Mobbley with delight in the visit. The Mobbleys were obese and florid. Insisting that they had already eaten, they sat at table and joined heartily in the food.

Mobbley said between mouthfuls, "I ain't one to hold his trouble against a man. I've always said, you didn't do no more than ary other man in a quarrel, and the argument going against him. If you hadn't of pushed that sorry Wilbur out of the rowboat into the lake, he'd of pitched you out and it would of been you drowned and him in the penitentiary."

Adams said eagerly, "That's what the new superintendent said, getting me the pardon. He said it was self-defense,

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like, and I shouldn't never of been allowed to plead guilty to second-degree murder. It was manslaughter at the very worst, he said, and that ain't serious. Not twenty years sentence, no-how."

Mobbley frowned.

He said, "Course, it ain't every neighbor would come to you right off, like me. There's folks figure the jail is the jail."

Adams said humbly, "It's mighty good of you, coming." He hitched himself about on his chair. He asked eagerly, "You want to see the pardon?"

They leaned forward in their chairs.

"I've always wanted to see one," Mrs. Mobbley said.

The kitchen became vitalized with the pardon. He drew it out slowly from his inside coat pocket and unrolled it. The large seal shone in the lamp-light. The parchment paper was thick and white, like a magnolia petal. Mrs. Mobbley trailed her fingers over its smoothness.

Mobbley asked, "Do the governor hisself sign them?"

Adams pointed to the scrawled name.

"I'll be blest." Mobbley studied the signature. "He don't write no better than no other man."

Adams apologized, "I reckon he gets to writing careless, with all them state documents to sign."

The four-year-old boy whimpered.

The girl Quincie whispered, "Lila, give him some gravy for his grits. You know he don't like 'em dry."

Mrs. Mobbley said, "I reckon home cooking tastes mighty good after jail-house rations."

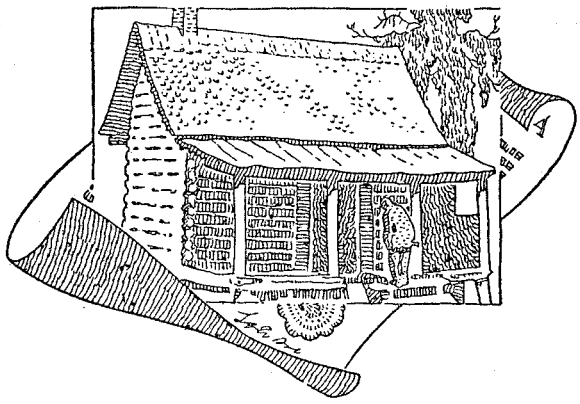
He brought himself back with a start from the pardon to the table. The food was inferior to the penitentiary fare.

He said reluctantly, "Well, we had mighty good rations. Not much change— If you got tired of beans, why, nobody felt bad about it—you had to eat beans, or go hungry, right on."

Mobbley and Joe Porter laughed with him. His numbness dissolved. He was aware of the warmth of the room and the crackling of wood in the stove. He stretched his legs under the table, feeling the pine boards of the floor rough under his feet.

He said, "Dogged if the floor don't feel peculiar. The floor up yonder was cement."

The penitentiary loomed before his sight; immensely white; modern and bright and handsome. It was a cross between heaven and hell, he thought hazily, a fabulous place where doomed men



moved in a silent torment in the midst of electric-lit, immaculate surroundings. The gray unpainted room about him, fire-lit and intimate in the November darkness, was the world, and he had come back to it. His toes and fingers tingled, as though life had begun to prick through a disembodied spirit.

The two girls and the small boy sat stiffly in the pain of young sleepiness, their eyelids fluttering. The Mobbleys took up the talk and chattered of county news, correcting each other. Emma said, "I'd ought to clear up the table," but she sat still, moving only her hands, now along the edge of the oilcloth table-cover, now up and back across her hair. Joe Porter filled his pipe and teetered in his chair. The Mobbleys rose to take their leave. Mrs. Mobbley looked quickly from Emma to Adams, and then to Joe.

She asked with an excited sucking of breath, "Joe, you coming with us tonight?"

He teetered a moment. He moved slowly to the stove and knocked out his pipe against it.

"I reckon," he said and joined the Mobbleys at the door.

Emma called after him, "You studying on digging the sweet potatoes tomorrow?"

He hesitated.

"I'll let you know about it."

Adams left them talking in the doorway and walked to the larger of the two bedrooms. On the bed was a quilt he recognized. His heart raced. The door closed after Joe and the Mobbleys and the front gate clicked. Emma walked past him into the bedroom and knelt down to draw extra quilts from a box under the double bed. He followed her and crouched beside her. He put an arm around her waist. It felt rounder than he had remembered it. Her flesh was soft and pliable.

"Emma——"

She did not answer. Her eyes focused without attention on the box of quilts.

"No need to be so rabbity with me, Honey," he said.

She dropped a quilt on the floor, handling it absently.

"I been thinking the past hour," he said, "about sleeping with you."

She said desperately, "You got the right. The law gives you the right."

He stood up.

"I hate you should talk about the law for such as that." He pondered, "I reckon I feel strange to you."

She straightened, standing with her back to the wall, the quilt bundled in front of her. Her mouth quivered. Her eyes were like a mare's in panic. He looked out into the kitchen. The two girls were putting away the last of the dishes. The four-year-old boy lay curled on the floor in front of the stove, sleeping like a puppy. Adams stared at him. A sick fear paralyzed him.

"Emma—" He seemed to hear his own voice coming from a great distance. "Who's the little feller?" The woman did not speak. He faltered, "I figured he come with Mobbleys——"

The older girl bent protectively over the child, arranging his clothes.

The younger girl called shrilly, "He's ours."

His head thickened. He shook it to lighten the weight. His mouth jumped at one corner. He turned toward the woman. She stood with the back of her head pressed hard against the wall, rolling it from side to side. Her eyes were closed. The quilt slid from her arms and she lifted one hand and crammed it against her mouth. She opened her eyes and looked at him.

She cried out in a loud voice, "I had to have help on the place. A woman can't farm it alone. The fences was near about rotted to the ground."

He opened and closed his fingers. Fire moved in tongues across his numb-

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ness, as though life and death competed for his body.

The woman whimpered, "Nobody didn't never figure on no pardon."

The wind in the chinaberry was blowing from an alien world and passing to another. The room lay inside it, lost in stillness. The fire died away through his limbs and the numbness possessed him. He moved to the door of the smaller bedroom.

"Where must I sleep?" he asked.

"I just don't know——"

He looked from one bedroom toward the other.

She offered hurriedly, "The girls is mighty big to be sleeping in the bed with a man—but the little bed is awful small."

The girl Quincie carried the child toward them. She looked questioningly from the man to the woman.

Emma said, moistening her lips, "You'll have to let your father say, about the sleeping."

He said dully, "You and the two girls keep the big bed."

The girl went into the smaller room with the child; fumbled with its garments and left it and went away. The door of the large bedroom closed behind her.

The man felt chilled. He undressed by the kitchen range, hanging his clothes on wooden pegs on the wall. He turned out the kerosene lamp. Darkness closed in on him. Where he had been cold, he was suffocated. He shuffled across the boards in his bare feet, careless of splinters, and threw open the front door. The wind bit like cold teeth into his body. He shivered and closed the door, standing uncertainly with his hands against it.

It seemed to him that he had forgotten something. He rubbed his forehead. He had forgotten the pardon. He had left it lying on the table, where something might happen to it in the night. A gust of wind might blow it near the stove and a spark ignite it. He groped his way across the kitchen and laid his hands on the parchment. An ember glowed in the range and the seal shone briefly in the blackness. He rolled up the paper and went to his bedroom.

The boy lay sleeping. Adams could not bring himself to lie down beside him. He sat on the edge of the narrow bed, warming his feet one with the other. He twisted the roll of parchment aimlessly in his hands. The room was a black box over him. He crossed his arms over his stomach, bending his upper body, swaying. A ghost must feel so, he thought, homeless between two worlds.

He pictured the penitentiary at this moment. It would be not quite dark, for a light would be glinting at the far end of the corridor. It would be not quite silent, for the guard would walk along the cement floor. It would be not quite lonely, for every man had a cell-mate. A wave of desolation washed over him, so that he thought he should never swim to the top of it.

Beside him, the child mumbled. Adams drew a deep breath. He reached out his hand and touched the fine hair of the head. He trembled. He moved his hand slowly over the small hump of body under the quilt.

"Pore little bastard," he said, "I reckon you wasn't much wanted."

The boy cried out sharply in a nightmare. His legs convulsed. Adams drew the quilt closer about the thin neck.

"Running from the booger-man, sonny?" he asked. "Don't you fret—I've got a-holt of you."

He slipped under the covers and pushed the pardon carefully beneath his pillow.

OUTDOOR DANCE

By Robert P. Tristram Coffin

Perhaps in all there were some ten
Everyday, plain fishing men,
Dancing with their girls and wives,
Putting all their hungry lives
Into the rhythm of the thin
Accordion and violin.
They danced open to the night,
Four smoky lanterns gave them light
Below the spruces dark and vast.
The music thinned and faded fast
Into the starry vacant spaces.
There were no eyes in their mask-faces,
The lanterns lit their brows and chins.
They moved in goodnesses and sins,
Swung and turned in eyeless grace
As if they were some mighty race
And not small atoms far below
Night's lanterns lit eons ago.
Their minds were in their thighs and feet,
Their muscles stood out fierce and sweet,
They were naked manliness,
Moving to a timed caress.
Their shadows went up brave and tall
Against the night's tremendous wall,
And stars flashed brighter in the sky
As each man's shadow hurtled by.

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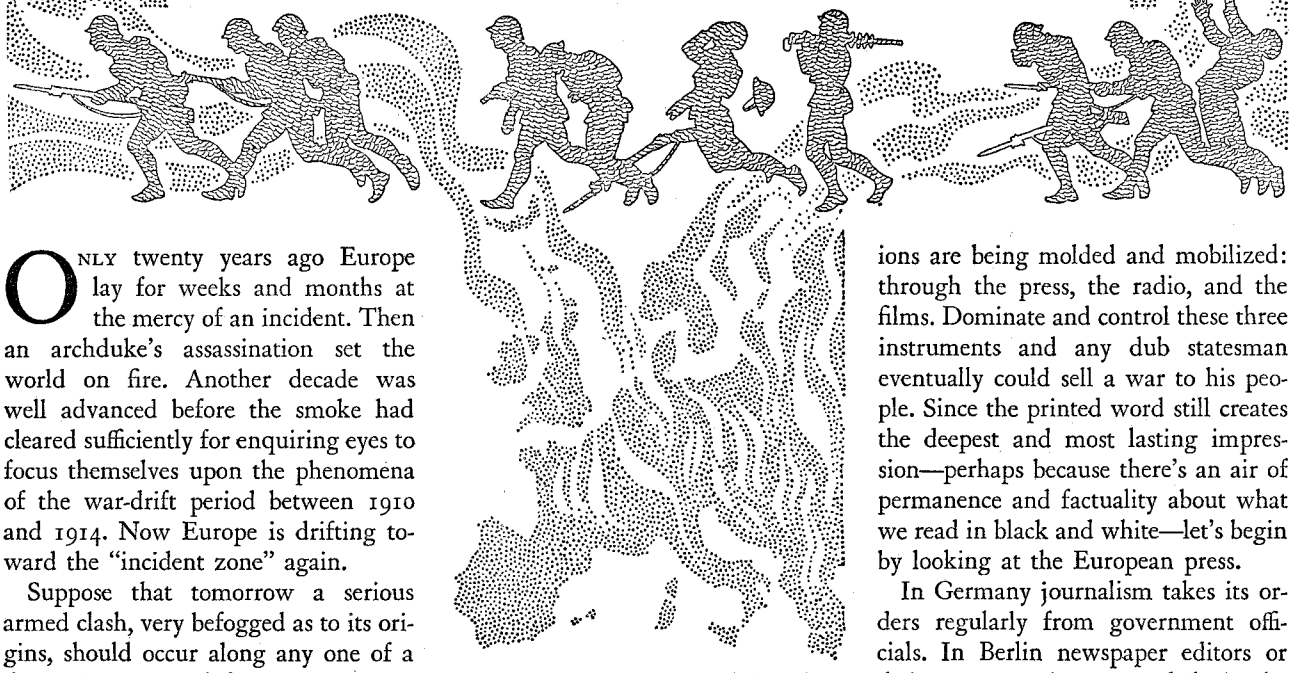
Propaganda Over Europe

By Leland Stowe

Newspapers, radio, and films are the kept instruments of European governments and private interests. The free press is dead in Europe, reports the Paris correspondent of The New York Herald Tribune



Only twenty years ago Europe lay for weeks and months at the mercy of an incident. Then an archduke's assassination set the world on fire. Another decade was well advanced before the smoke had cleared sufficiently for enquiring eyes to focus themselves upon the phenomena of the war-drift period between 1910 and 1914. Now Europe is drifting toward the "incident zone" again.

Suppose that tomorrow a serious armed clash, very befogged as to its origins, should occur along any one of a dozen international frontiers. Suppose 500,000 men were on the march before nightfall; 500 airplanes in the skies with incalculably destructive bombs under their wings. Suppose, within another forty-eight hours, that 5,000,000 men were mobilized; that within a week at least 12,000,000 of Europe's youth had been called to arms. Suppose we should all find ourselves clutched in the talons of a new and more terrible mid-August, 1914.

Of the first 12,000,000 men, who marched off to fertilize unknown fields, how many would have the faintest idea how it came about; of what forces and what groups of persons were actually to blame? Would they possess any more accurate ideas about the all-important causes than their fathers had two decades ago?

And of some 150,000,000 civilians, again doomed to become the direct or indirect victims of modern slaughter, how many would have any modest conception of both sides of the issues in advance of this second twentieth-century reversion to mass suicide? Perhaps seven or eight million persons (if we are generous in our estimate) and the majority of these, curiously enough, would have been warned about the war motives by Europe's Socialist or Left-wing press.

Contemporary Europe seethes with bitterly opposed nationalisms. Moderation has been stifled. So the tension of Continental cross-purposes slowly heightens while objectivity shrivels in its heat.

Public information, in its true sense, is on the retreat. Semi-facts, propaganda or outright lies are dished out to the average citizen in a score of countries with skill and cunning and sometimes with thinly veiled contempt.

Take a close look at what passes for organs of information on the Continent today, examine the new and unparalleled machinery for propaganda which has been built up since 1919.

There are three principal mediums through which European public opinions are being molded and mobilized: through the press, the radio, and the films. Dominate and control these three instruments and any dub statesman eventually could sell a war to his people. Since the printed word still creates the deepest and most lasting impression—perhaps because there's an air of permanence and factuality about what we read in black and white—let's begin by looking at the European press.

In Germany journalism takes its orders regularly from government officials. In Berlin newspaper editors or their representatives meet daily in the Ministry of Propaganda and Enlightenment (the Nazi government is the first in history to create a special ministry by this name) and there receive instructions as to what news of the day must be given prominent front-page space; what choice bits should be inserted to prepare public opinion for a "sensational development" ten days hence; and what real news must be deliberately suppressed. So it happens that once-great newspapers like the *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung* can no longer be distinguished appreciably from the rabid tom-tomings of the *Volkische Beobachter,* the National Socialists' party organ. So it happened, that the number of American citizens beaten up and maltreated under the Hitler régime last autumn attained a total of more than thirty—and the number of American Government protests an equivalent high—before a single one of these "regrettable incidents" was recognized as news in the German press. Such facts, of course, would have

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discredited the régime in power. Had a group of brownshirts blown up a bridgehead in the Saar would the German masses have been any better informed of the facts?

Approximately 2000 dailies remained in Germany after Hitler had abolished 159 Socialist and 32 Communist newspapers. They remained to become both the puppets and instruments of the Nazi dictatorship which proceeded to create an elaborate national press code whereby every German reporter, duly labelled "a servant of the State," is licensed and responsible to the government for what he writes. This same code deprives publishers of the right to determine either the contents or the policy of their newspapers. It even establishes this significant definition of every journalist's duty: "to *keep out* matter calculated to weaken the power of the Reich at home or abroad, its *military spirit* or its culture and economy."

But Hitler has merely taken one more successful page from Mussolini's book. On July 8, 1924, Il Duce whipped through the Italian Council of Ministers a decree placing the control of Italy's press in the hands of the provincial prefects. Since then the prefects have sequestrated newspapers at will, suspended them as might be deemed "constructive" or suppressed them if information too distasteful to the régime was published. A second decree in January, 1925, gave the prefects unlimited and uncontrolled powers as censors. Finally, in June of that same year the government was authorized to amend the Penal Code with "the necessary measures for preventing and repressing the abuses and crimes committed by means of the press." Nor are the populations of Austria, Poland, and Jugoslavia much better off.

Nor are the majority of French journals free from pressure and control of various kinds. The French press has probably the most unenviable reputation for corruptness of any major power. In France the practice of large press subsidies is longstanding but added to this is the common charge that many dailies, some of much influence, can be bought. Two editors of Paris newspapers, Camille Aymard of *La Liberté* and Albert Dubarry of *La Volonté,* have already been arrested in the sensational Stavisky scandal on account of large sums of money which they accepted from the swindler. The revelation that Stavisky spent 3,000,000 francs for journalistic bribes in two years' time evoked no public surprise.

While in Bucharest in June, 1930, a Roumanian official informed me that Carol, as a disinherited exiled prince, had expended thousands of francs to get certain important Paris dailies to champion his eventual return to the throne. There have circulated about Paris, too, such tasty morsels as the story that one French daily (an important one) once received "sympathy funds" simultaneously from both the Spanish royalist and Spanish republican camps, until news favorable to both sides couldn't be juggled any longer. To similar ends the Japanese were credibly reported to have been very active at the time of the Manchurian invasion. Allegations of this sort, heard repeatedly over a period of eight years, can scarcely be regarded in any other light than as having a very considerable basis in fact.

Governmental subsidies are sufficiently acknowledged in French journalism for M. Franklin Bouillon to make an uncontested statement in the Chamber of Deputies last January that "the last payment to *La Volonté* was 70,000 francs." The amounts at the disposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries are not believed to be very large. Some report the Quai d'Orsay's annual fund for press usage at about 2,500,000 francs. The pre-Hitler Prussian budget of 1930 set aside 1,193,000 marks for distribution to the press, it should be recalled.

In present times what may arouse more concern about the French press is the rôle played by subsidies from private or industrial groups, some of which could not fail to make big profits if war came. In this respect, as Europe's political skies darken, more attention is being paid to the indubitable journalistic influence exercised by the famous French steel trust, the Comité des Forges. Assembled in this group are the French armament makers and the vast industrial equipment of Schneider-Creusot. M. François de Wendel, a French deputy and a director of the Bank of France, is president of the Comité des Forges and heads the citadel of munitions makers in France.

Without proceeding beyond this elemental fact it is interesting to examine the ownership of some of the most influential Parisian newspapers. *Le Temps,* long regarded as the semi-official organ of the government, still carries a weight of opinion in keeping with that great tradition. About two years ago, however, a majority of shares in *Le Temps* passed into the control of the Comité des Forges. Another organ of much influence, the *Journal des Débats,* though owned by a titled Right-wing conservative, enjoys the blessing of the de Wendels. In one form or another the steel cartel enjoys privileged contacts with several French dailies while in some quarters it is confidently asserted that a large slice of shares (some say 14,000 shares or more) of the greatest French news agency, the Agence Havas, is also owned by the Comité des Forges. In its turn the links of Havas Agency with a number of important organs, such as *Le Journal* and *Le Petit Journal,* are exceptionally close. Directly or indirectly, the French steel kings and arms manufacturers can influence or control the news which reaches many millions of readers. Obviously they do not control either the Radical-Socialist, the Socialist or Communist press or some other independent journals.

Now let us take the radio. Here the French Government wins a credit mark since, until now, it has almost ignored the microphone's propaganda potentialities. Not so with most of Europe, notably the Nazis and Fascist Italy. But dynamic Doctor Goebbels (now known as Mahatma Propagandi) seized all the laurels for Germany within a few weeks of Hitler's rise to power. Broadcasting stations were arbitrarily enlisted in the service of National Socialism. The emotional thunders of Hitler, Goebbels, Goering, Rosenberg and others of the Nazi hierarchy boomed from 4,521,000 registered receiving sets within the Reich almost nightly. In September Foreign Minister von Neurath invited foreign correspondents, of whom I was one, to the Kaiserhof for an intimate soirée and rose scrupulously behind a microphone when he started to address us. A few days' observations sufficed to demonstrate that nothing whatever now percolates through to Germany's vast radio public save that which the dictatorship wants it to know —or to believe.

The so-called news reports from Hit-

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ler-controlled stations are an especially effective weapon. Portions of the Reichstag fire trial's daily testimony went on the air from shrewdly edited phonograph records last autumn. One day we were elated to hear the names of prominent Nazi leaders suddenly mentioned openly in the courtroom in connection with responsibility for the burning of the Reichstag. A fine news story for the outside world. That night I was edified to hear the radio "news" announcer portray to millions of German listeners in vivid terms the extreme "indignation" with which foreign correspondents in the court had greeted such an unthinkable accusation. How was a Silesian farmer to detect that little phrase as a conscienceless lie?

There remain the talkies, nor have they been overlooked. Fascist Italy has long maintained the strictest censorship over all films. The L. U. C. E., a government-controlled company, issues a highly propagandized newsreel which all of Italy's 3000 theatres are compelled to buy. No films of any kind, foreign or domestic, can be distributed except by government approval. A significant feature of Italian film control, as of that in Germany, is the complete prohibition of anti-war pictures and the deletion of occasional scenes in other movies which show war in an unpleasant light. Those films which portray warfare as glorious, noble, and romantic, however, receive official encouragement.

The banning of "All Quiet on the Western Front" early in Hitler's régime was characteristic of European dictatorships' attitude toward war films. But perhaps the greatest cultural triumph occurred when the Nazis recently outlawed "Tarzan of the Apes." Official reasons: dangerous to Nazi principles of race consciousness and contrary to Hitlerism's stress on "hereditary biology."

In Germany there are 3457 tone-film theatres with total seating capacity of 1,475,000. Lynx-like Doctor Goebbels quickly put directors to work turning out blatant Nazi propaganda films which every theatre is obliged to buy and exhibit for as long a period as the government orders. Such a film is "Hitler Junge Quex," the story of a poor boy who almost succumbed to communistic barbarism until he saw the light and gave his life for the Hitler youth movement. I went to see it in Berlin, knowing it to be a seductive splurge of emotional appeal intended to win patriotic youngsters into the Nazi fold. Prepared as I was there were moments when the tear ducts threatened to go out of control. For a newspaper man this was the height of humiliation. I wondered how boys and girls from twelve to twenty could possibly resist a masterpiece of propaganda like that. Long since virtually every schoolteacher in Germany, under governmental command, has declared a holiday from lessons and marched adolescent classes into the nearest theatre to see "Hitler Junge Quex."

The cry for nationalistic and militaristic propaganda rises steadily all over the Continent. As I write, the day's press offers an appeal voiced by Marshal Pétain, Minister of War in the Doumergue Cabinet. Addressing the Reserve Officers' National Union, Marshal Pétain says France must "develop in the heart of youth the liking and knowledge of military things so as to prepare it for the accomplishment of the most sacred of duties—eventual defense of the nation." These words are the precise prescription, remarked again and again, in the speeches and writings of Nazi leaders. "Let us work in this direction. Stir up public opinion and remake it if need be," Marshal Pétain added. Propaganda is the one art, in a distraught and harassed Europe, which is assured of ever more elaborate development.

Among the foremost refinements of the twentieth century must be listed this systematic and wholesale manufacture of public opinion. Streamlined chassis have to be planned, plotted, and molded in advance. So does the production of a mass idea, mass prejudice, or mass emotion. Physical equipment is required for both and so are engineers. But what is of most importance is the corps of engineers. Where Europe's propaganda is concerned the engineers are more skilful and alert than they were in 1914.

It used to be said that an informed public opinion was the safeguard of democracy. Today democracy in Europe is dead in most countries; dying or fighting for existence in others. No thoughtful observer abroad can pretend that impotent and deformed public opinions, as they now exist, offer any substantial bulwark to European peace in the critical months and years immediately ahead.

FOREST

By Harry Roskolenkier

THIS is a world of silence, but for the quiet of the wind
anchoring in the trees! the rustling
blown leaves have small music,
till they tumble, gracefully writhing
the dead sown earth.
The spear-shaped grass bends,
like a man at prayer; obeisant
to the Still Wind.

There will be rain coming! Over the hill
in the north—the clouds
are horses leaping! Hear the thunder
of the white hooves cracking;
rockets of the white seen wind:
there is such madness in such beauty!

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Miss Barrows and Doctor Wirt

An inside story of a famous episode

By Edmund Wilson

Caricatures by PEGGY BACON

The KERENSKY *of the American Revolution as caught by Peggy Bacon's pencil at a press conference*

Miss Alice Barrows and Doctor William A. Wirt had for twenty years been friends and allies in the field of advanced education.

Doctor Wirt is the inventor of the school system which he prefers to have called the work-study-play plan, but which is more commonly known as the Gary system. After experimenting with it first in 1902 in his native town of Bluffton, Ind., he went to Gary. Gary was then simply a tract of land which had recently been bought by the Steel Corporation and named after its honored chairman, and where there were only three hundred people.

Doctor Wirt had been inspired and influenced by John Dewey and William Morris. He wanted schools where the children would have a chance at an all-around cultural development and where they would be free to cultivate special aptitudes. He was opposed to routine teaching, to regimentation, and to the kind of vocational training in which Henry Ford has taken such an interest and which is designed to break in young people to factory work before they have left their schoolhouses so that they may make an easy transition to the factories. He thus found himself in opposition to the policies of the United States Steel Corporation, which believed that the children of workers should not be allowed to learn too much, that, in fact, the non-contentious rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic were about all they could be safely trusted with. When Doctor Wirt was trying to get a plot of land to put up a new kind of school building which would enable him to carry out his ideas, the steel company refused to sell it to him, and one day he found that his plans had mysteriously disappeared from his files.

But Doctor Wirt's work-study-play system had the advantage from the point of view of economy and efficiency that, applying the balanced-load principle of industry to schools, it increased their capacity 33 per cent. And Doctor Wirt was at that time a young, strong-minded, strong-willed, and dynamic man possessed by a compelling vision of education. He got his fine new schoolhouse in Gary and he gave the children such excellent training that a remarkably large proportion went on to college. The music teaching was particularly good, and a number of the graduates distinguished themselves musically. The steel people, who by 1918 were in rather bad odor with the public and who were uneasy over the discontent of their workers, began to take an interest and a pride in Doctor Wirt's educational gift to Gary. Doctor Wirt had provided the children with little gardens to tend, ponies to ride, tennis-courts to play on.

And the Gary system spread through the country. By 1933 it had been adopted by schools in five hundred cities, the number having doubled during the three preceding years. Miss Barrows, who was an educational specialist, became interested in the work-study-play plan and in 1917, when Doctor Wirt came to New York to install it there under the auspices of the Mitchel administration, Miss Barrows worked with him as his secretary. They had little in common in their political views: Doctor Wirt was an old-fashioned individualist and Miss Barrows believed in a planned economy. But they both believed in the work-study-play plan, and in the field of education they were both radicals, so that they did not find it necessary to debate politics and the social-economic system. In New York they had to fight together the corrupt officials and the conservative educators. When Tammany finally won out and Doctor Wirt went back to Gary, he and Miss Barrows remained close friends: Miss Barrows visited Gary every year.

When the depression came, Gary was hit hard: 90 per cent of the people

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were out of work, and the mill superintendent was serving as watchman. Doctor Wirt, whose prime preoccupation for years had been the welfare of the children of Gary, had the crisis before his eyes and on his mind night and day. He arranged to enable them to make themselves clothes through the domestic science department of his school; and he established a record for public schools by giving them breakfast and dinner for four cents a day. And he thought up a scheme to end the depression. The scheme was to send up prices and at the same time to devalue the dollar. He became—at the age of sixty—more or less of a crank on the subject; and he looked with extreme disfavor on many of the policies of the administration. He himself had had to fight for an original idea, and he conceived that he had been given a fair field because he had been able to put it over in Gary. The brains trust administrators, it seemed to him, were trying to dictate to people, to regiment them, to interfere with the free play of forces. And Doctor Wirt became a member of that active organization consecrated to American individualism and "alarmed over the dangerous trends in business," called the Committee for the Nation. He made use of the Committee for the Nation to publicize his scheme for devaluing the dollar; and they evidently made use of him.

When Doctor Wirt came on to Washington in connection with the business of the Committee, he would usually look up Miss Barrows, who had for fourteen years now been a school building specialist in the educational office of the Department of the Interior. Last fall Mr. Robert Kohn, the director of the housing division of the PWA, wanted somebody to help with education in connection with the subsistence homesteads. Miss Barrows suggested Doctor Wirt. Doctor Wirt was not very favorably disposed, because subsistence homesteads meant depopulating the cities and without large modern cities you could never get the equipment necessary for work-study-play schools, and besides the whole thing smacked of socialism. But Miss Barrows invited him to dinner to meet some of the liberals in the administration and to try to interest him in the kind of thing they were doing.

There were Miss Hildegarde Kneeland, an economist in the Department of Agriculture, appointed during the Coolidge administration; Miss Mary Taylor, the editor of the consumers' guide of the AAA; Mr. Robert Bruère, the director of the NRA Industrial Relations Board of the textile industry; Mr. David C. Coyle, a consulting engineer and a specialist in wind-resistance, a member of the Technical Board of Review of the PWA; and Mr. Laurence Todd, the American representative of the Russian news agency, Tass. They were all middle-class intellectuals like Doctor Wirt himself, experts in various fields with, most of them, liberal views.

Doctor Wirt began by talking about education, but soon got off on his money theory and, though Miss Barrows tried from time to time to bring him back to education, went on to expound it for four solid hours. He reviewed for them the history of currency from the earliest times to the present day and showed how his plan was logically inescapable. The audience began by being impressed but ended by being exhausted. Miss Kneeland, who had been chafing to debate with him, was able to interrupt him only once briefly when he spoke of his desire to bring the country back to the conditions of 1926, by demanding to know why he wanted to; but he brushed her aside and swept on. Miss Fleta Springer, who was ill upstairs, testifies to having heard from her bedroom the interminable drone of Doctor Wirt and to the piteous complaints of the other ladies when they occasionally got away for a moment.

JOHN COLLIER, *head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a brain-truster, who espouses the doctrine that Indians are not incompetent*

Everybody wondered at Doctor Wirt; Mr. Coyle, after the Doctor's departure, was congratulated on his fortunate equipment as an expert in wind-resistance. Doctor Wirt told Miss Barrows, when he saw her next day, that he was afraid he had talked too much the night before. They continued to see each other and remain friendly.

What happened then is well known. The president of the Remington-Rand Company read before the Senate committee on the Stock Market Bill some statements made by Doctor Wirt in the course of one of his currency leaflets circulated by the Committee for the Nation. Doctor Wirt had, he claimed, definite evidence that there was a red plot on foot at Washington: radicals concealed in the administration were planning to shanghai the President and to impose on the country a Communist dictatorship.

The Democrats demanded that these charges be investigated and summoned Doctor Wirt to Washington. A few days before he came, Doctor Wirt wrote Miss Barrows a letter:

"I have hesitated to write you because I did not want to inadvertently mix you up with the present controversy. However, since the press notices have come to me concerning the dinner party in Virginia . . . I am quite sure that I will be asked about the dinner at the hearing. . . . In order to remove what may be a serious strain upon you I want to state very definitely and support it with copies of my letters to you concerning my visits, that my relationship with you and every one in the Department of Education was purely on educational matters . . . I shall state . . . that I asked to see Mr. Coyle because I was interested in discussing with him his argument in a publication concerning the 'present era' of plenty and the necessity of increasing the service-occupations activities. . . . I shall emphasize that so far as Mr. Coyle is concerned, he did not directly or indirectly refer to the general social or economic program of the New Dealers. As to Robert Bruère, I shall make very clear that he was constantly objecting to the diversion of the conversation from the subject of schools . . . I merely want to advise you of the situation so that you and Doctor Zook and other persons in the Department of Education will un-

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derstand my attitude. The only thing that I remember about you and government is the statement that you made to me that you were working on schools and leaving saving the country to the other fellow.

"With best wishes, and kindest regards to Doctor Zook, I am

Cordially yours,

WILLIAM WIRT."

Miss Barrows, as a matter of fact, had not worried, and continued to remain quite untroubled till she turned on her radio the morning of the hearing and heard Doctor Wirt testifying that Miss Taylor, Miss Kneeland, and Mr. Todd had told him in so many words at her dinner that Franklin Roosevelt was the Kerensky of a revolution for which they would presently find the Stalin; that though the President appeared to be making his own decisions, the truth was that they had him in the middle of a swift stream where it would be impossible now for him to turn back; and that—Miss Kneeland was supposed to have quoted this from Tugwell—the ultimate aim was to abolish private business and to set up a new social order.

Now Miss Kneeland had never at that time met Tugwell nor read any of his books, nor could anybody at Miss Barrows's dinner remember that anybody had said anything about Roosevelt, Kerensky, or Stalin. Doctor Wirt, who had prepared a memorandum to read before the Senate committee (of which the first section recounting his attempts to induce the company to accept his money theory had been entitled "Futile Effort"), had introduced a number of passages from the speeches and books of Tugwell, and it has been conjectured that he may have gotten Kerensky from the last paragraph of the new book by Ernest Lindley called "The Roosevelt Revolution." Perhaps he had intended to concentrate attention on the published opinions of the leaders of the brains trust and to leave the guests at the dinner out of it. Perhaps he had actually confused in his mind what he had read with what he had heard said. But the fact is that under examination he charged the guests at Miss Barrows's dinner with having recited long passages out of Tugwell and of having done a number of other fantastic things of which they could not conceivably have been capable. And the fact is that he delivered them all straight into the hands of

FREDERIC C. HOWE, *Consumers' Counsel of the AAA. G. O. P. senators view him with alarm because he was not sufficiently hard-boiled with immigrants*

the red-ragging Republican opposition, who snapped and yapped at them when they were examined a few days later about how Robert Bruère had defended the I. W. W. during the War and how Frederick C. Howe, as Commissioner of Immigration, had tried to save some anarchists from being deported. And the fact is that the reactionary press had in no time seized on Doctor Wirt's fantasies and on the sinister hints of the Republican inquisitors, and were using them against the administration.

Doctor Wirt must have got more than he bargained for. He protested rather pathetically at one point: "I am not a Bourbon. I believe in social reform." It is almost certainly not true that Doctor Wirt has been the tool of the Steel Corporation: he has, as I have said, had to fight the steel people. But, as it turns out, he is more deeply at one with them than he may perhaps have imagined at that time. Doctor Wirt has always been anti-union. He destroyed some years ago the Gary local of the teachers' union. And now, lined up with the other anti-union forces, he finds himself in disconcerting company. One of the chief figures in the Committee for the Nation and apparently the chief guiding spirit behind the recent performance of Doctor Wirt is an earnestly anti-union hosiery manufacturer, who is said to have paid the expenses of Jim Reed as Doctor Wirt's counsel. And among Doctor Wirt's allies of the Committee for the Nation are men who represent the cotton interests, the warship interests, the aviation interests; and one of its directors is the president of the Dairymen's League, regarded by the New York farmers as the agency chiefly responsible for the milk racket, against which they are now in rebellion. And one of the Committee for the Nation's chief objects has been to block the Copeland Pure Food and Drugs Bill. You can see the kind of thing which hopes to profit by the defeat of the Pure Food and Drugs Bill in the Chamber of Horrors of the Chemical Building: hair dyes that make people bald, beauty lotions that cause the teeth to fall out and give rise to necrosis of the jaw, aniline "lash lures" that cause blindness; inflated and adulterated ice creams, cheese and candy boxes with false bottoms, malted milk made of sucrose, egg noodles faked by transparent yellow wrappers; horse liniment sold as a cure for t.b. and killing the sufferer more quickly than the t.b. germ, diabetes remedies made out of the horsetail weed and exhibited with testimonials on one side and death certificates on the other.

Doctor Wirt, the educational reformer, the disciple of William Morris, cuts a curious figure today as he appears before that background of catarrh remedies, kidney elixirs, female tonics, rheumatic compounds, liver aids—inexterminable witnesses, while capitalism lasts, of the drawbacks of that system of private enterprise which Doctor Wirt is exerting himself to rescue.

And Miss Barrows, who for twenty years followed, admired, and worked with Doctor Wirt, she, too, finds herself taking a position which she had not quite realized was inevitable. Miss Barrows, since the Wirt episode, has definitely felt that it is impossible to get a new deal in education without a new social-economic system.

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CWA School for the Home Folks

By Lena Martin Smith

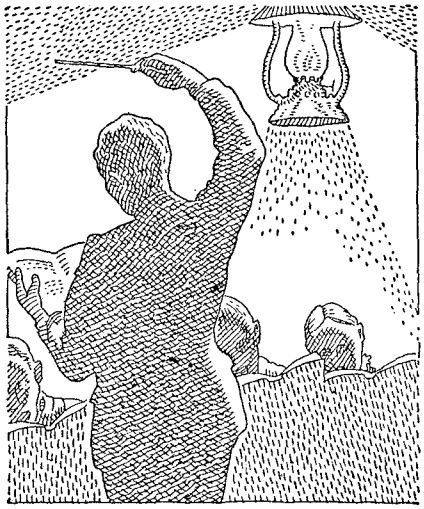
A Ph.D. signs up with CWA and teaches the village singing and economics

Two years ago this would have been written as a deep dark secret. But now, why should it be? Any one we care about knows that we were among those eleven millions of unemployed, and had been for almost three years.

We did make the most of our enforced vacation for two years. We took the family savings, what there was left of it, and went to a university town. With as much eagerness as he could muster, and with some of the faith he had twenty years ago, my husband dived into "preliminaries," examinations in reading French and German, the grilling ordeal of a dissertation, and the final oral before that array of Ph.D.'s, who eventually said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" —and they should have added, "Enter now into the ranks of unemployed!"

This coming-home business may be joyful within reason, when one is still in the twenties. When we reach the forties and have youngsters in high school, when father and mother are past threescore and ten, and we feel that we should be making a home for them, "coming home" for reasons of economy brings into being a whole new set of problems for Emily Post.

"Isn't it grand to have your daughter's family home?" my mother's friends say. And mother—at seventy, mind you—lies so loyally and cheerfully, "Yes, indeed! It is just like old times. We would be so lonesome now if they left us." Bless her heart, she doesn't tell them how she rushed the morning paper to me when she found that Doctor XYZ, of Podunk University, was killed in an auto accident, explaining as she did so, "He had the Social Science Department. Now there's a chance for Ralph!"



Another thing, the average wardrobe can be stretched over many months of extra wear, but not many Americans can feel quite up to standard in the third year of wear, even when cleaned, remodelled, or freshened up with a new cravat, or "gee-gaw" around the neck.

During the fall months our flimsy excuses became tiresome, even to us, and we gained some poise by saying frankly, "Yes, we have no employment!" R. H. had applied for every civil-service place for which he was eligible. He had hundreds of letters of recommendation for school jobs, but so had the other 199 applicants. He is a man of 6 feet 4 inches, weighing 215, and in excellent health. He has most of his life earnings invested in such unmarketable assets as B.S., LL.B., M.S., and Ph.D.—with a bank account dwindled to a bread-line status.

My parents live in a Kansas village of 200 population where the labor problem is only read about in the daily newspapers. The laborers are section hands, store keepers, barbers, mail carriers (one from the train to the post office, and one for the rural route), one part-time preacher, five gasoline-tank service men for stores, one depot agent, one elevator man, several retired old folks, a few who get help from the county, and a half-dozen farm hands. This is home to Mother and Father. Here they have lived for fifty years—we celebrated their golden wedding this winter—and acquired enough to live modestly the remainder of their days. From this village the children have scattered all over the nation and a few to foreign lands.

It is a great tradition "to go away" to high positions and great service. It is a strange thing to "come home" and live as we lived twenty-five years ago, with such improvements as a gasoline lamp in place of oil; paved roads instead of dirt; and a car instead of a carriage. But with the same stove in the centre of a rambling house; ice-cold beds, ice-cold outdoor toilets! To do our own laundry, heating water on an oil stove; to iron with flatirons; to get the water fresh from the well for "dinner" so it will be cool in summer or not frozen in winter!

It was in December, 1933, when the announcement reached our county in Kansas, that the CWA would have some funds for unemployed teachers. The telephone rang.

"Get registered, Smith. It may lead to something. There will be a need of supervision, surely," came the advice from a college friend.

Our battered old car did not look out of place among those lined up in front of the office of the county Poor Commissioner.

"Will they give any one a job who isn't destitute?" I asked R. H. We could hardly claim that yet.

"I have no idea, but we shall find out," answered R. H. He marched right

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up to the door, entered the old frame house, and was gone for half an hour.

When he returned he said, "I had to sign up my pedigree, including all my belongings, the investments we can't get, and the house which rents for less than the loan and taxes. But the lady says there is a fund to pay unemployed teachers. Now, the next thing is to find some one who craves knowledge."

"Get your own job?" I asked, astounded.

"Exactly. Make it myself. Go out and find some one willing to be taught."

That was a "stumper." A man who should be addressed as "Doctor Smith" and who should be behind a mahogany desk in a well-lighted college classroom, is told to "go out in the highways and hedges, and if any one will stand for your teaching, Uncle Sam will pay the bill."

Well, our pet definition of an educated man is "one who can cope with any environment in which he finds himself."

"This is our intelligence test," I insisted, with a chuckle. And in that spirit we laid our plans. Of course there were some general instructions. "Adult Education" was suggested. What sort of adult education? We learned that persons over sixteen, in class groups of from ten to forty, depending upon the subject chosen, might be "approved."

R. H. grew up on a farm, fourteen miles from our village, but only five miles out from a rural town of 2400.

"Let's start in our home communities," he suggested. We drove out to the farm district, a place of old acquaintances and relatives. It took a day of explaining and visiting to gain consent to use the one-room schoolhouse two nights a week. We arranged for an announcement at the country church, that a meeting would be held "for those over sixteen, to consider organizing a farmer school to study economics."

"What's economics?" asked one.

"Money — price of wheat — new deals," began R. H., searching for a subject of interest.

"Will you tell us what all this gold talk is about?"

"Yes, sir!" said R. H., stoutly, wondering if he knew it well enough himself to explain it.

"Well, that would be worth while. Sure, I'll come," added this farmer.

On January 1st, Monday night, at 7:30, twenty-two farmers and wives, with a few young sons and daughters, met at the one-room school and planned the "farmers' school" to meet two nights a week during January and February.

"Ralph is posted!" one friend explained. No "Doctor Smith" in this classroom, but just plain Ralph, the neighbor boy who went to college.

"Now, can you imagine these old friends listening to me very long? I tell you frankly, we've tackled something! I don't believe there is a man in America who can lecture for two months in his home community."

"We can't lose much trying it out," I offered weakly, "and that is the only way we can know."

We started this farmer school as project number one. We started a community singing school in our village as project number two. We located ten rural teachers who failed to go to college for lack of funds. We organized them into a college extension class as project number three.

They were approved. R. H. was to receive twenty-five dollars a week for eleven hours of lecturing and eleven hours of preparation. The projects required about one hundred and fifty miles of driving each week. No expense money of any type was to be allowed.

On that first Wednesday evening when we were to start the Community Singing it was raining, a cold January rain. We drove down the one gravelled street to find the village church dark. The janitor lived a block away on a muddy by-street. We found him. He brought a gallon of gasoline and started up the engine so we might have light.

Seventeen persons came to the first "sing." They represented three village families and four rural families living two, three, and five miles out on farms. While the rain beat down upon our church roof we sang lustily together, fun songs, familiar songs, and inspirational songs. Then we talked together. As the farm class called my husband "Ralph" so these village neighbors called me "Lena." I became director of the singing, while R. H. led the tenor section.

"Let's have a little organization," I proposed. "One with no dues, no roll call. Just something that might live on and foster such as this in our community, if Ralph and I should get work and move away."

They were eager for plans. One mother of six young girls and boys said, "Tell us how. We have wished for years for just such a chance as this."

So we talked and planned and organized into a Community Arts Association, a high-sounding name for a tiny village wish. We stated our object as "to help along" all opportunities for our community to develop music, art, dramatics, and crafts.

"What will I have to do?" asked the farm-boy president of this new-born Community Arts Association.

"I don't know," I answered. "We will have to wait and see. You know a project is an adventure. We had no idea whether a soul would come tonight. But here we are, showing that some one believes community singing worth while. How many of you think you will return Saturday night?"

Our new president shook his head. "I have to work," but he added brightly, "but I can be here every Wednesday night."

So project number two was launched and all who came out in the cold rain seemed glad of the adventure. They carried flashlights instead of lanterns as they walked along paths black with darkness unrelieved by moon or stars or street lights—or sought their cars instead of buggies. One country mother with two daughters felt quite safe in the car; two sisters under twenty came in another car alone. Incidentally, they helped milk seven cows before the evening chores were done at home.

After school hours at four-thirty at the village schoolhouse of two rooms, where the principal gets the magnificent salary of fifty dollars a month and his assistant forty dollars, Doctor Smith met his college-extension class of ten. Each is a rural teacher living at his or her father's home and driving to distant one-room schools. Of this group, each must have a high-school education, and additional training for a teacher's license. Each is required to be on duty from eight-thirty to four-thirty, including the noon hour, to supervise all school activities, playground activities, noon lunches, and classroom work. This does not include time spent in preparation, grading papers, attending county

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organizations, participation in contests, etc. It is a very conservative estimate to allow each teacher a fifty-hour week.

"These are a dandy bunch of youngsters," said R. H., "who crave to know things! They are the highest type of college timber and when this depression gets out of their way, our colleges will be flooded with them!"

All ages of public-school people are as familiar to R. H. as bread and butter. It was in the farmer school and in the community singing school that he, and I too, found adventure.

"Can you believe it?" R. H. exclaimed, with a new note of self-confidence one day. "These farm folk have come for twelve nights, and we have discussed pure theories of economics! Do they want to know about currency, and labor, and banks, and markets? Do they ask questions about price-levels, and government debt, and taxes? You have heard them? What do you think about the daily paper naming it a course in practical economics?"

"They were dead sure that no group of farmers would listen to pure theories," I explained.

"I didn't think so either," confessed R. H. Then he recalled that Everett Dean Martin once stated that any adult audience of American laborers could understand any theory which he was able to expound to them.

"I have had to lay aside technical terms. I have had to take time to be a dictionary and an encyclopedia, but what of that? What is the result?"

"One result is that invitation for tomorrow night!" I answered.

A farmer had come to R. H. and said, "We meet to discuss the corn-hog contracts tomorrow night, Ralph. We want you to make an introductory talk and tell them why farmers should cooperate with the government on this experiment."

"How much time?"

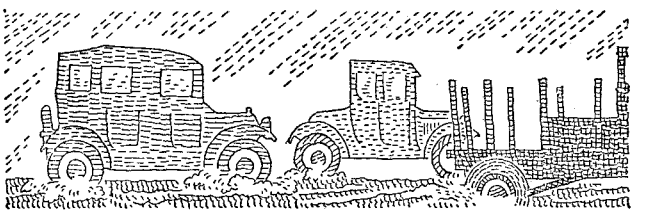
"Oh, not more than ten minutes!"

Imagine telling farmers in ten minutes something national speakers had been using hours, days, weeks, months to explain through the press, radio, and national oratory.

"OK," said R. H., as cheerful as though he had been invited to a chicken dinner.

And the theme he chose for the ten-minute speech was "How Will You Ever Know, If You Don't Try?" His illustration was fertilizers. How would they ever know the success or failure of fertilizer? This is an age of scientific thinking and of testing out theories by practical tests.

One farmer said at that meeting, "I tell you, fellers, us farmers has got so we don't trust each other. Ain't that the biggest reason any of us give fer not signin' up?"



So, the farmer's economic school became also a place of discussion of each phase of the contracts to be signed by farmers in the new experiments on crop reduction.

It would make an interesting dissertation for any Ph.D. to analyze the effect on eight million farmers, of signing these contracts. Not the money received from the government, or its effects; not the resulting price advance or decrease; but the results of fact-finding processes farmers are forced to go through, the statements about production they are required to sign, the energy it has taken to draw designs showing exact locations of plots of ground "rented" to Uncle Sam.

Many good farmers keep books on calendars, file papers in the clock case, or in a certain jar on a certain shelf. It would make an interesting folk history to record just how and where each farmer of this one small school found evidence of his hog sales for the past year.

Here is a sample of the recess visiting at our night school.

"John found three more hogs today!"

"Where?"

"Do you remember those three old sows that he kept back out of that load he sold Talley for Joplin last November? He let them go a week later and we had forgotten all about them. That makes 142 he sold last year."

"We can't find a thing to show how many Ben sent to market that time in Bill's load. None of us remember the number. They were all mixed up with Bill's."

"Did you draw John's map?" asked one wife of another.

"Yes, and got the road all wrong. Had to have another copy. Do you suppose they will inspect each piece of ground?"

And so on and on. Such animation; such discussion, a mingling of enthusiasm and doubt!

From the first, our village "sing" drew a larger and larger attendance, singers, visitors, and children. Curiosity brought many of them. It was circus to see any one wield a baton. It was some place to go, and it was interesting to see what happened at a singing school.

We borrowed community song books until some could be purchased. During the ten-minute recess we taught rote songs to the children. We gave some time to ensemble work with women's voices and for men's voices. We studied songs by types; those for beauty and inspiration, those for joy and laughter, and those for pep and fun and cheer. We gave a little attention to encouraging special talent.

Our expenses were rated at fifty cents a night; twenty-five cents for janitor, and the other twenty-five cents for coal and gasoline. This with our new song books ran our bills up to ten dollars at the end of twelve rehearsals. We gave a free program and took a silver offering. This with the profits from a food sale in the community house after the "concert" brought in fourteen dollars. Our crowd, including the singers, was probably one hundred fifty, but the house was full.

In our chorus was one family of father, mother, two sons and a daughter; a tenor, who was foreman of the section gang; a tenor farm boy who had been in no social activity for four years; a trio of sisters, whose mother accompanied their special number; and a farm lad who sang his first solo.

The expressions of the President and Congress began to indicate in February that CWA workers would be demobilized in a few weeks. R. H. sent out investigative letters about several school jobs; he applied along with perhaps two hundred others for a superintendency in Texas; he gained the promise of

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a college faculty job, if and when the legislature increased the budget for the school.

In the meantime we were trying to get the most possible from this adventure in "folk education." We were fully aware that it was an unusual experience. We were glad to know of the eagerness of our countrymen to learn; it was refreshing to see their disregard of scholastic customs that mean so little. It was more to R. H. to have a farmer say that he was "posted" than to have been addressed as "Doctor." It was more to me to have sons and daughters of my girlhood friends come to me for help in music than to have bowed before college audiences who had been bored with "too, too much," and who must resort to fine-haired criticism.

If the future had not held that fear of uncertainty that makes folks in the forties wonder about old age, we might have been able to be a little gayer. We might have been able to have felt this carnival atmosphere, and rejoiced as we went along. As it was, we hoped to be able to tell our great-grandchildren some real tales of "when we fought in the peace battles of 1933–34." Tales of when we lighted the lamp, cleaned our shoes and got ready for another night class of volunteers. Of how we sent for shoe polish when "they" went after the mail, for there were no shoe shops in the village; how we took turns dressing in our combination storeroom, bathroom, bedroom, not for the sake of modesty, but for room. How we were a little grumpy until a bright-eyed miss said to me, "That's three coats I've seen on you. Have you been to Europe? You seem to have been everywhere. I haven't ever been on a train."

One morning the last week in February I noticed how the gray was thickening in R. H.'s hair, but I noticed also that his eyes still laughed, thanks be! He had been to the post office and received an important letter. He handed it to me. The Commissioner of Education had appointed him as one of the 1468 Educational Advisers for the Civilian Conservation Corps and he was to report "now." He was assigned to CCC Co. 1711, near Pittsburg, Kansas. His appointment was for one month with a possible reappointment for one year.

He telephoned to the farmers' class that he would be unable to return. They replied that they had hoped to keep it going all summer, even if they did have to start getting up earlier for "oats-sowing time." The college-extension class planned to drive one night a week to the teachers college, twenty-two miles, where a professor was assigned to complete their course in sociology. We held one more village "sing." At the close we told them of R. H.'s new job. They sat in stunned silence. Finally I said, "Aren't you glad we have a job?" They smiled reluctantly, and one said, "Yes, but what about us?"

We moved to Pittsburg, a town of 20,000, but R. H. must live in a remodelled box-car two miles out, in camp with his 200 boys. We have entered another new field of educational endeavor, which is far removed from mahogany desks and the riches of modern educational equipment. This duty of being educational adviser for an unclassified group of husky young Americans has already in these first few weeks taxed our best powers of thinking, to solve the problems. For I, too, am to have the privilege of being an obscure partner in this new field. Some of the problems to date have included teaching a lad of twenty-two to read, with only a book for equipment. R. H. knows three languages and has rated primary teachers for years, but this is his first endeavor with a primer. He has scores of eager boys who have sought counsel about careers, and whose educational training ranges from seventh grade to college. His is the duty of finding opportunity for them to continue their studies after work hours. He has social problems to solve, from the comedy of the young man sulking because his girl friend will not allow him to dance with other girls to the tragedy of the lad of twenty who must have his mother adjudged insane and placed in a state institution, as it is unsafe to leave her alone while he earns this twenty-five dollars a month to send for her "keep."

Still, there are many who see the unemployed from a distant hilltop, and hold the same opinion as one of R. H.'s farmer students in CWA. This farmer asked this question one night in all seriousness, "Ain't it the truth, Ralph, that all of them unemployed are just America's weaklings?"

BOYS IN A BOX CAR

By Franklin Folsom

MIGRATING, they rustle and rest at a siding, as bluebirds
in coming north will stop on a certain hill
which then grows bright with bodies, starved and still,
fallen from fences and wires and such winter hazards.
These boys are moving, but they are helpless as birds
magnetically drawn like shuttles in a loom
from drought or desert far into winter gloom
and back again. And all their food is words.

They are powerless as shuttles weaving woof,
moreover they are useless, lacking thread;
they are weak as bluebirds on a February roof
or hill, awaiting gifts of chilly bread;
but they are men, surly and strange and aloof,
trying to cast the light of their anger ahead.

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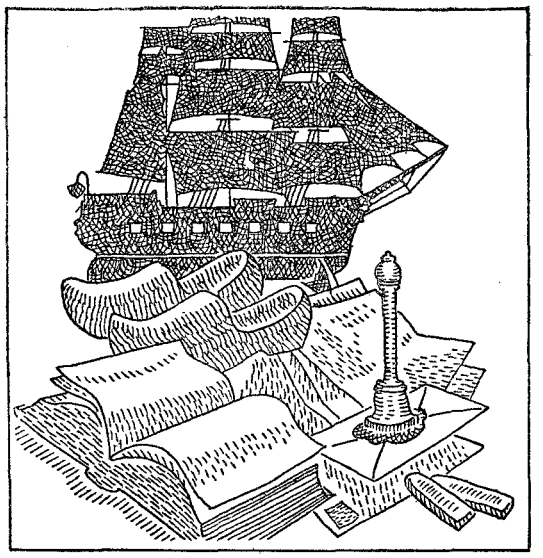
AS I LIKE IT

William Lyon Phelps



Women and Gardens . . . The Most Terrifying Story . . . Pulitzer Prizes by a Former Committeeman . . . Religion Holds On . . . Russian Gloom and Journalistic Howlers

WHEN these lines appear in print, the glorious summer will be at its flood; and every one who owns or visits a garden will see a profusion of beauty. Hence I advise all persons who are pleasantly affected by the sight of flowers—whether they be royal roses or the meanest flowers that blow—to hasten to the nearest bookshop and buy (not borrow) *The Story of Gardening,* by Richardson Wright. The secondary title more particularly describes the scope and purpose of the book: *From the Hanging Gardens of Babylon to the Hanging Gardens of New York*. This is a volume of 475 pages, with a bibliography and conscientiously copious index and forty-five full-page illustrations and a large number of smaller ones. Mere mention of some of these pictures will give Scribnerians a notion of the range of this book: a picture by LeMoyne in 1564, a Persian garden of the sixteenth century, an early Japanese garden scene, a garden at Florence in the thirteenth century, the old knot garden revived in Florida, oranges in Holland, cactus in California, a New York roof-garden with a view from the heights over the magnificent river.

If any one imagines because of the wealth of knowledge displayed, that this work is encyclopedish or brittle with facts, let him read the first page, which is at once disarming and challenging.

> In one of his essays Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch spins a plausible yarn about a Roman légionnaire slogging along a muddy road in Gaul toward far-away Britain. The Channel finally crossed, he flings his march-worn, mud-caked boots into a ditch. Next year, from those clods of Gallic mire, springs up on British soil a wild flower that never grew there before.
>
> By even such romantic chance has many a flower passed from its native heath to foreign lands, and many a garden, flourishing today to delight our eyes, has travelled an equally twisted trail of fortuitous migration.
>
> Come out into the garden on a day in June. Step down from the door on to the terrace. At once we encounter the marks of wayfaring. This terrace, with its studied figures in brick and stone flagging—whence sprang the idea? Did ancient Rome have such terraces? And who first conceived this transition place between the house and the garden?

The first chapter has forty definite questions. The remaining chapters answer them.

Women and gardens have always been associated. In the Garden of Eden, while Adam named the animals, I feel sure Eve named the flowers. There is no sight more beautiful than a beautiful woman in a beautiful garden—a lovely picture in a perfect frame. In Browning's poem "Garden Fancies" we read

> Down this side of the gravel-walk
> She went while her robe's edge brushed the box:
> And here she paused in her gracious talk
> To point me a moth on the milk-white phlox. . . .
> But do not detain me now; for she lingers
> There, like sunshine over the ground,
> And ever I see her soft white fingers
> Searching after the bud she found.

Indeed, the poets have compared women to gardens. Thomas Campion said

> There is a garden in her face
> Where roses and white lilies blow.

For while women know more about flowers than most men will ever know, men have written the best poetry about both women and gardens. The seventeenth-century poet Andrew Marvell is remembered only for his poem "The Garden," with its lines

> Society is all but rude
> To this delicious solitude . . .
>
> Annihilating all that's made
> To a green thought in a green shade . . .
>
> Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
> Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
> Casting the body's vest aside,
> My soul into the boughs does glide:
> There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
> Then whets and combs its silver wings,
> And, till prepared for longer flight,
> Waves in its plumes the various light.

Just as I cannot remember learning to read, so women cannot remember learning the names of flowers. They seem to have learned them instinctively. And as most houses and firm buildings are designed by male architects, so most landscape-architects are designing women. A distinguished Boston scholar told me that if no flowers came up in the spring, he would not notice their absence.

I think men-novelists, when they use what I call the botanical opening (a very common beginning) either look up the flowers in a reference-book, or obtain the necessary facts from their wives.

And yet so many professional gardeners are Scotsmen!

Some time ago I was talking with my friend Professor Henry A. Perkins of Trinity College, Hartford, about terrifying fiction; and I remarked that the story which had filled me with terror almost beyond endurance was *The*

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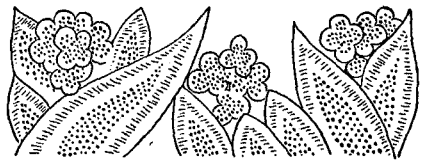
Turn of the Screw by Henry James. He admitted its power, but thought that it was exceeded in horror by *The Beckoning Fair One,* written by Oliver Onions. I read this tale and am almost sorry I did. Almost, but not quite; for a new sensation is always interesting.



However, take my word for it and don't read it.

Stephen Vincent Benét takes a vacation occasionally and writes a novel; I have read all his works in verse and prose, and I am sure that his latest novel is his best. *James Shore's Daughter* has some beautifully written pages, is sufficiently garnished with incident to hold one's attention, and in character-analysis is remarkable. Its only concession to what is supposed to be the current taste in fiction does not seriously mar the book. The decline and death of James Shore's father impressed me permanently. No one but a master of the English language could have written it.

When the Pulitzer Prize Committee takes into consideration possible candidates in poetry next year, I hope they will not overlook Leonard Bacon. He is always original; and possesses the art of combining imagination and satire to a very high degree. His most recent volume, called *Dream and Action,* is a dramatic narrative of the astounding adventures of the French poet Jean Arthur Rimbaud (1854–1891). Although in George Moore's *Impressions and Opinions,* published about the time of Rimbaud's death, I read an account of him and his work, I had alas! forgotten his existence. I shall now take the hint Mr. Bacon gives to forgetters, and read his poem *Le Bateau Ivre,* a fine translation of which the American poet appends to this volume. I am glad to see the compliment he pays to Professor F. B. Luquiens, a distinguished scholar in Romance languages, who combines scrupulous accuracy with impeccable taste.

Mr. Bacon's biographical poem in stanzas fills 61 pages, and I venture to say that no one who reads the first few stanzas will omit any that follow. Such a life was indeed stranger than fiction; and if the reader becomes excited about Rimbaud—as he probably will—he may look him up in any good encyclopedia, and see what happened. Although Mr. Bacon says

> Any one who thinks this work should correspond
> With the actual facts behind has my permission
> To go to Sheol and all points beyond,
> And to continue there in such condition,

I believe that this poem comes closer to the facts than any prose biography could do; for prose is unequal to the situation.

David McCord's slender volume *The Crows* is in a quieter mood; and the two books might be taken to indicate the possible range of the poetic art. Mr. McCord is an American poet who has done such good work that I am certain he will do better. I shall read every line he prints.

The Shorter Poems of Robert Browning, edited by Professor William Clyde DeVane, with an interesting introduction and valuable notes, is an excellent book for use in the classroom or anywhere else. Professor DeVane's work on Browning's *Parlayings* established his position as one of the leading Browning scholars in America. He is as sensible as he is learned.

The other day I read as a piece of news that in fifty years science will have completely destroyed religion, so that there will be nothing left of it except a memory. Meanwhile conversions to the Roman Catholic Church continue in such quantity and quality as to excite the attention of all who are interested in what is called the trend of modern thought. I recommend to those who wonder "how any intelligent man can become a Roman Catholic" a little book called *Restoration,* written by Ross J. S. Hoffman, a professor of history in New York University, who tells us how he went from nothing to everything.

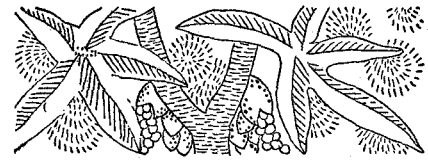
An admirable biographical and critical book, *Alfred de Vigny,* is by Arnold Whitridge. It gives the best account of this aristocratic poet and novelist and academician that I have seen. Apart from the display of knowledge of French literature of the nineteenth century, there are many penetrating remarks on human nature.

I wish I could unreservedly praise a curious philosophical biography of Swift, written by Mario M. Rossi and Joseph W. Hone, called *Swift or The Egotist.* No writer was ever clearer than Swift; no one ever had a better command of saying exactly what he wished to say. But in this biography I feel all the time that the two authors have some valuable ideas which it would be well for me to know if only I could disentangle them from the language in which they are fatally imbedded. I can honestly recommend the book as strenuous intellectual exercise.

Madison Grant's *The Conquest of a Continent* will enrage those who disagree with the author's conclusions; and I certainly feel that they should be taken with reservations. But it is a book that all Americans should read, especially those who feel certain they can answer it. We may have departed from the ideas and ideals of the men who originally settled our colonies, but we have a good deal to learn from the citizens of Munich, for example. Mr. Grant's thesis is founded on much patient research; and the facts anyhow will interest all intelligent readers.

In *The New York Sun* I found a complete list of the prize winners in play-writing since the Pulitzer Prize was first awarded in 1918. Here they are:

> Jesse Lynch Williams.
> Eugene O'Neill.
> Eugene O'Neill.
> Owen Davis.
> Hatcher Hughes.
> Sidney Howard.
> George Kelly.
> Paul Green.
> Eugene O'Neill.
> Elmer Rice.
> Marc Connelly.
> Susan Glaspell.
> Kaufman-Ryskind-Gershwin.
> Maxwell Anderson.
> Sidney Kingsley.



I was on the committee for the second, third, fourth, and fifth. There was considerable excitement when we recommended Owen Davis's *Ice-Bound,* for many critics viewed this prolific

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and successful playwright with uplifted eyebrows. But I am glad we gave him the prize for the simple reason that his play deserved it. The next year we voted two to one for Kelly's *The Show-Off*, a play that I shall always remember with delight. But we were overruled. I am glad the committee were overruled this year, for *Men in White* seems to me the most original and the best play of the season.

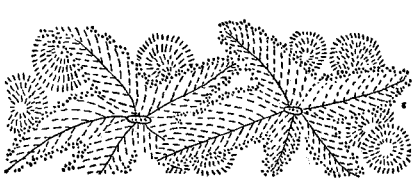
My friend and quondam pupil, Hudson (Boz) Hawley, has been transferred by the International News Service from Berlin to London; he previously served in Paris and Rome. It was while he was at Paris that we had our memorable joint interview with Léon Daudet. Boz sends me the following paragraph from Wyndham Lewis's column in *The Daily Mail* called "Crazy News Reel."

Saepe miratus.—I have often wondered whether Russian novelists use a rubber stamp. Here is a little rural picture from a long novel by Sholokhov, published in 1929 and just translated:

"In every farmyard, under the roof of every hut, each was living a full-blooded, bitter-sweet life, separate and apart from the rest. Old Grishaka was suffering with his teeth; Mokhov, crushed by his shame, was stroking his beard, weeping and grinding his teeth; Stepan nursed his hatred for Gregor in his heart and tore at the shaggy blanket with iron fingers in his sleep; Natalia ran into the shed and fell to the ground, shaking and huddling into a ball as she wept over her lost happiness; Gregor sighed, oppressed by gloomy presentiments and his continually returning pain; as Aksinia caressed her husband she flooded her undying hatred for him with tears."

If I haven't read exactly the same idyllic passage in Tchehov, Dostoievsky, Tourgeniev, Gogol, Tolstoy, and all the other big boys I will eat my hairy Caucasian bonnet with a quart of cabbage-soup.

It is as conventional for Russian writers to be dismal as it is for Americans to be cheerful. When Chekhov began to write, he gave his sense of humor full swing, but he was so chided



for it by older writers that (like Calvin Coolidge) he repressed it; although in Coolidge's case it was politics and in Chekhov's tuberculosis, that had something to do with it. But tragedy is the ruling convention in Russia. When Gorki visited Coney Island, he wrote that every person there looked wretched, sad, and hopeless.

From the same newspaper Boz sends me these actual howlers:

The Bill of Rights said that no man could be thrown into Parliament without trial. This was a great stride forward in the world-famed British justice.

Lady Jane Grey sat on the thorn for a few days only, and when Queen Elizabeth removed her and she was executed, she died saying if I had served you as you have served me you would have been dead long ago.

"Habeas Corpus" was a phrase much used during the Great Plague of London, and means "Bring out your dead."

Five Mile Act. No clergyman could come within five miles of his former living unless he signed the pledge.

A crisis is a thing which hangs up in the winter and comes down in the summer, as a butterfly.

An octopus is a cat with eight sides.

A bishop without a diocese is called a gentleman-in-waiting.

Book-keeping is the silent art of not returning books borrowed.

Captain Cook made three voyages round the world. He was, however, killed during the first of these.

A deacon is the lowest kind of Christian.

Britain has been responsible for many damns on the Nile.

Darwin is the author of a famous book called "Tarzan of the Apes."

And I take pleasure in quoting Hawley's account, as staff correspondent in the International News Service, of the tribute recently received in Germany by Hindenburg.

You and the rest of the boys may be interested to know that recently I saw Old Man von Hindenburg for the first time, and found he was bearing up wonderfully—which proves what rotten marksmen we must have been. If you and I are in as good form at 46 as that tough old gentleman is at 86, we shall be doing pretty darned well!

His entrance was magnificently staged. The organizers got the house well warmed up first with a lot of stirring marches. Then, all of a sudden, the big hall was stilled. A lone windjammer sounded off "General's March." And in walked the Old Man.

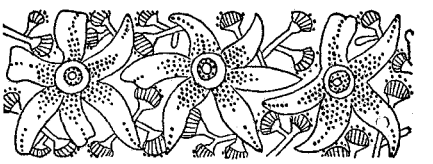
Well, you should have heard that yell! One wow from 20,000 people, one "Heil!" with everything behind it! The Reichswehr boys and the vets in uniform snapped into it with the old salute—and I bet their heels are still aching from it. The young lads in the brown shirts jerked up their arms till they must have hurt at the joints. And the women? They just went hay-wire!

There were a lot of old ladies in black, who simply couldn't keep the tears back. (Yes, dammit, and one lone Yank found he just had to blow his nose. . . .)

The Old Man (that's what they all call him —"Der Alte") stood up stiff as a flagpole when they marched the colors of all the old regiments past him. Every one of those color guards got a snappy personal salute from him; and the crowd, delighted to see him so spry and alert, roared its appreciation.

It gave me a lot to think about. Perhaps the one thing that sticks out in my mind the most is that—well, we had one hell of a narrow escape!

Some interesting and valuable notes from Professor Carl J. Weber, of Colby College.



"The sixth sentence ['all artists . . . resent and dislike their past accomplishments'] may not be true of 'all artists' but it is unquestionably true of many of them." W. L. P.: "As I Like It," SCRIBNER'S (95:289), April, 1934.

ILLUSTRATION

Richard Woodhouse to John Taylor, September 20, 1819:—

"Keats . . . wanted . . . to publish *The Eve of St. Agnes* and *Lamia* immediately. . . . I wondered why he said nothing of *Isabella:* & assured him it would please more than the *Eve of St. Agnes*—He said he could not bear the former now. It appeared to him mawkish. This . . . feeling is very likely to come across an author on review of a former work of his own. . . ."

(Original letter in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.)

And, in the May, 1934, SCRIBNER'S,

Page 372: *Chosen Poems of Thomas Hardy.* —"It will probably have an enormous circulation. . . . The name of the chooser is not given—Mrs. Hardy?"

CHOSEN POEMS were chosen by Hardy himself. This is not a new selection, but a reprint. In 1916 Hardy made a selection which was issued in London under the title SELECTED POEMS; this was reprinted in 1916, 1917, 1922, 1924, 1925, and 1927. Shortly before his death, he arranged for a briefer selection,—and in 1929 CHOSEN POEMS first appeared, reprinting the SELECTED volume with the omission of fifty poems, according to my count. I have it on the statement of the London editor (Macmillan's office) that Hardy made the selection himself. It is not a perfect one; I could make a better! So could you!

Next column, page 372:—Mrs. C. H. Smith of Proctor, Vermont: "How, in the making of the language, did this happen? . . . Why should the *w* change the vowel sound?"

In answering the first question, can you not refer Mrs. Smith to THE MAKING OF ENGLISH, by Henry Bradley (Macmillan?)? In answering the second question, Mrs. Smith might find some interest in having it pointed out that "card," "chard," "bard," all come from the French (carde, Latin: carduus; chardon, barde); whereas "ward" comes from the Anglo-Saxon (Old English) "weard." The same difference in origin explains the difference in the pronunciation of two words with the same meaning,—warden, and guardian.

I have just received a letter from Mrs. Hardy confirming Mr. Weber's statement about the *Chosen Poems.*

The distinguished London publicist,

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S. K. Ratcliffe, makes some extremely interesting annotations:

My dear Billy:

APRIL LIKES

Most important names in D.A.B.—would you not admit that Cotton Mather might be reckoned in the long-run quite as important as judge and president? He seems to be allotted a very meager space.

Gadge. I am calling the attention of a friend who is in touch with the Oxford Dictionary to this page.

Marianne Evans. The epoch, of course, when people in England coming out of the simple nonconformist class were ashamed to be called Mary Anne and Sarah Anne, which names were everywhere in England. Browning's sister, for instance. I would make the guess that your correspondent's volume of Goethe was acquired in the transition stage—say, just before she went to Chapman's. Probably she had not quite got used to the change, and tried that spelling for a time.

I am surprised that you adopt the modern American form, *A* hotel. It is now usual in England; but I wouldn't say it or write it. I rather think that I hear from older Americans a few more of the unaspirated words than one now hears in England: for instance, you don't hear on this side Umble or Erb, and I have heard both in America. All the more noticeable on your side, of course, because of the tremendous force given to the aspirate generally. It is still not unusual to hear Wye and Wich from educated English people, although in my lifetime the adoption of the Scotch and Irish sound of Wh has become widespread in England. I can remember the first time I heard in London the full aspirate in White, and how strange it sounded. The speaker was an Irish parson. *A* hotel, I submit, is barbarous. I refuse to submit to it.

I agree about the high accomplishment of *Work of Art* (Why will these authors, American and English, leave out the article from their titles? This has, within the past ten years, become so almost universal that no one can believe that Marc Connelly's title is *THE Green Pastures*. And here, as it happens, is a title that would have been good without the article. By the bye, how many Scribnerians have heard of *Green Pastures & Piccadilly*, or its author?). But is not a point, the point, about *Work of Art*, its general dreariness of effect? It is to me much more dreary than *Main Street* or *Babbitt*. No relief, I think, from end to end, for all its wonderful competence.

The favorite Dickens? Can there be any dispute? I have never been a re-reader of novels. I've seen my young people reread one or two of their favorites six, ten, times. But here is my record in respect of *David Copperfield*. I read it three times in my youth; and then I read it aloud to each of my three children in turn: to the two elders without missing a word; to No. 3, as I remember, with some skippings. It would seem to me that, with the possible exception of *Pickwick Papers*, which I have never re-read, no other Dickens would stand so many repetitions.

"Ulalume" Poe's masterpiece? Not so. A literary editor happened to say to me this week, that To Helen was worth all else that Poe wrote. I agree.

I know naught of your Adverse Club. But I have a friend in Orange, N. J., and a good man too, who has read the book twice through, simply because he liked it as a fine yarn.

Philip Snowden (Lord, as they call him now) misquoted Paracelsus in the opening part of his Autobiography. I turned it up to check him on "Make no more giants, God!" I haven't reread any page of it for forty years. What remarkable go it has! There isn't anything in Tennyson's early stuff (or later?) with a tenth of R. B.'s vitality here.

Concerning my remark on the expression "troublous life" in Newman's prayer, the Reverend Doctor John W. Suter of Boston, gives me some valuable information:

Newman did not write "of this troublous life" after "all the day long" and I submit that this shows his sure touch in phrasing, and that the prayer is immeasurably more beautiful and appealing without those qualifying words. Some "tinker" I presume, at some time added them. . . .

The tinker mentioned above (or another) improved upon Newman in the words that follow. Newman . . . went on:—"until the shades lengthen." It should, of course, be *shadows*, as commonly printed. Aside from the needed two syllables for the rhythm, shades deepen, shadows lengthen.

The prayer is now, since the 1928 version, in the Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church, among the prayers at the end, following Family Prayer.

Frank Bergen, of Newark, N. J., corrects a statement I made in the May issue.

Washington did not say that the Constitution was founded on too favorable an opinion of human nature. He said that the government under the Articles of Confederation was so founded, and as I remember he said that before the Constitution was adopted.

Thomas David Hudson of Wilmington, Del., joins the F. Q. club, having read the poem in three months; he was led to it by Miss Frances Guild, his former teacher in English. He writes his credentials in verse. I also welcome Roman P. Welch, of Royalton, Minn. And I am glad to add the name of the Reverend Isaac Ogden Rankin, of Brookline, Mass., who, when an undergraduate at Princeton more than sixty years ago, read the entire poem.

From B. Vincent Imbrie, of Pittsburgh:

In *Louise* by Saki (H. H. Munro)—

"I remember now. I asked Louise to read the *Faerie Queen* to poor Emma to try to send her to sleep. I always get some one to read the *Faerie Queen* to me when I have neuralgia and it usually sends me to sleep. Louise doesn't seem to have been successful but one can't say she hasn't tried. I expect after the first hour or so the kitchen maid would rather have been left alone with her neuralgia but of course Louise wouldn't leave off till some one told her to."

THE ANTHONY ADVERSE CLUB gains as a member Charles A. Bolger, of River Edge, New Jersey, who read the entire book aloud to his wife.

My friend, Doctor Eugene Edmund Murphey, leading citizen of Augusta, Georgia, physician, ornithologist, poet, and an authority on solid and liquid nourishment who would delight the soul of Frank Crowninshield, gave me at my request the following original

Lines to accompany a flagon of Georgia's famous product on its way to California

On the hills of California and the sunny slopes of France
The heavy headed purple grapes hang earthward in a trance,
But in the fields of Georgia from the mountains to the sea
The stalwart stalks of Indian Corn stand up most valiantly.

And when the grapes are ripened they yield their juices sweet
To the soft and even pressure of the peasants' naked feet,
But the corn is more resistant, it will yield itself alone
To the firm relentless grinding of two mighty wheels of stone.

And so its parents' weakness is renascent in the wine.
Its effect is soft and clinging like the tendrils of the vine,
But if you lust for action or would lead a hope forlorn,
You will find the force that's needed in the Spirit of the Corn.

Grantland Rice, Gene Tunney, Professor Walter Prichard Eaton, and I, were playing golf in New Haven, when the game was nearly stopped by the following pun from Eaton: What was the first American poem alluding to golf?—*Thana-tops-his.*

NEW BOOKS MENTIONED WITH THEIR PUBLISHERS

The Story of Gardening, by Richardson Wright. Dodd Mead. $3.

James Shore's Daughter, by Stephen V. Benét. Doubleday Doran. $2.50.

Dream and Action, by Leonard Bacon. Harpers. $2.

The Shorter Poems of Robert Browning, Ed. W. C. DeVane. F. S. Crofts. $2.

The Crows, by David McCord. Scribners. $2.

Restoration, by R. J. S. Hoffman. Sheed and Ward. $1.50.

Alfred de Vigny, by Arnold Whitridge. Oxford. $2.50.

Swift or the Egotist, by Rossi and Hone. Dutton. $5.

The Conquest of a Continent, by Madison Grant. Scribners. $3.

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THE DARK SHORE

Continued from page 94

Concluding chapters of James Boyd's novel

They joined hands and started. Bearing Big Sister's wobbling weight between them, she and Jeanne Balso skated hard. They felt the line check at the other end and the taut stretch of the curve. They stood up straight and flew. "Wow!" said Big Sister. The tension snapped; they sailed away.

"That was Anna," Jeanne called. "She let go."

Ellen was with them. "I know she did," she said. "I tried to hold on."

"Why couldn't she hold on?" said Jeanne. "We missed half of it."

They stopped in a group. Big Sister glowered at them and grinned. "Wow," she said. "It was enough."

The others were calling. Their voices rang in the cold night. "Come on! Come on, you. Let's hold it this time."

"All right," Jeanne called. "We're coming."

"I'm going to look for Fitz," Clara said.

"Who's going to hold me up then?" Big Sister said.

"Don't go chasing after Fitz," Jeanne said. "He'll come when he's ready. They always do."

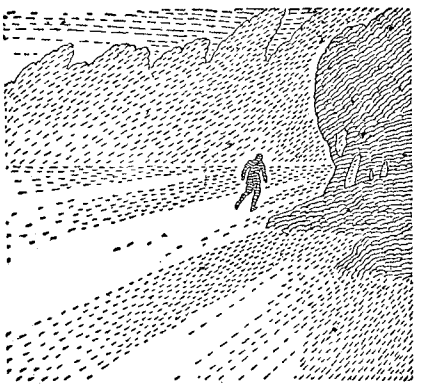
Good Doggie's voice came through the darkness. "Come on. What's the matter there?"

As she skated away, she heard their voices behind her near the fire. "She's gone to look for Fitz" . . . "to look for Fitz? oh, sugar!"

She turned first toward the lights of town. She passed dim figures in couples and some little boys and reached the bank at the foot of the wooden stairs. He must have turned upstream. She struck off for the middle of the river. The ice here had been used by many skaters. It was scarred and powdered, all its freshness gone. Ahead of her, dim trails of skaters formed and divided, passing around rough ice cakes embedded in the river.

There were skaters now, people, she supposed, from the upper end of town. There were silent couples, and a group of girls who laughed. Whenever she saw a single figure she swung over to it. Sometimes it was a girl, and once it was a man who said, "Hello, there, sister. What's your hurry?"

She guessed by the look of the bank and by the lay of the islands that she had come as far as Billygoat Town.



That was a long way, she thought suddenly, a long way. The river here was deserted. She skated on, straining to look across the dim, starlit ice.

All skate marks ended. It would be crazy to go on. "Fitz!" she called, then louder, more urgent, "Fitz!" She listened; her pulse rustled in her ears. She called again. Far off from under the dark, overhanging houses, the bad little boys of Billygoat Town sent her a mocking answer, faint whoops and a long falsetto.

She was skating down the river fast. Still she kept calling, screening her ear with her hand to listen. The lights of town crept slowly by, the stars wheeled overhead. Skaters slowed up, stopped, turned to look at her as she passed through them, calling.

The bonfire lay ahead. He might be there now, waiting for her. She dropped her head and flew. "Fitz!" she called. "Fitz!"

A figure spun out of the night. "Oh, George!" she said. "Oh, George!"

He took her by the arms. "We can't find him." His voice sounded small and furiously angry.

She tugged at him. "Where is he?" she said. "I must look."

He gripped her arms. "No, we're doing everything."

"I must look," she said. She thrust at his chest with her fist. "I'm not a baby."

He was running like a sprinter to keep up with her. His words came in short bursts. "We saw the skate marks between the islands there . . . right to open water. May not be his. . . . We made a rope of belts and mufflers. . . . Doggie's been in and that old fellow. . . . They could get their skates off quicker." She squeezed his hand. Poor George, he wanted to be first.

Between the islands Big Sister held a blazing branch high, her face a set mask under her heavy brows. There were logs laid on the ice and crouching figures. Their faces turned toward her and looked at her as though from far away. Ellen came up. "Clara," she said, "we don't know if it's him." She did not try to touch her. Anna Lyle came skating with two more blazing sticks. The flames flew back like small flags, the front of her white dress was marked with charcoal and she was crying. Big Sister took a stick from her. "Stop crying," she said, in a loud, fierce whisper.

"Here," said George's voice, "you can't go out there till Doggie comes in." He looked up from the shoe he tugged at. "Watch her, Ellen."

"It will only hold one, Clara," Ellen said.

Good Doggie's dark silhouette lay stretched out on the ice. Behind him, another silhouette lay holding him by the legs.

"Did Jeanne go for the firemen?" said George's voice.

"Yes." The second silhouette answered. It was Mr. Johnson. "I gave her my knife," he said, "to cut her shoelaces."

"All right," George said. The other shoe dropped on the ice. "Come on with that rope."

She turned. "George," she said. Her voice was tight and small, "don't go." George did not answer. "How long has it been?" she said.

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"Twelve minutes since we got here," Mr. Johnson said.

"It is no use," she said. "It's no——"

"Clara," Ellen's voice was quick and clear. "George wants to go."

Stocking feet thudded on the ice. The little man came up. His frozen clothing crackled and shone. His face was white and set and he was dancing to keep warm. He bent over close behind George and passed the end of the line of knotted mufflers under George's arms. "Now, listen, fellow," he said. "There's a gnarly root about twelve feet down stream. Keep to the right of that now. We've tried the other side."

George nodded. "Give me a minute and a half," he said. "I can do it easy."

Mr. Johnson backed in from the hole. "A minute and a half," he said. He stood up and handed his watch to Big Sister.

Good Doggie backed in and stood up. His clothing crackled as he shivered. "Everybody keep wide apart," he said. He chattered wildly. He looked at Clara. "You go away." She shook her head.

George crawled out on the ice. "Johnny," he said. "You'll have to hold the rope. You're the only man with skates."

"I'll hold it," Doggie said. "My stockings stick to the ice."

There was a gentle splash and George was gone. Paying the rope out, Doggie crept nearer the hole.

"Ten seconds," Big Sister said.

"He's on the bottom now," Good Doggie said. He crawled ahead on hands and knees.

"He's under the ice on the other side of the hole. He's about at the end of the rope," Good Doggie said. He lay down on the ice.

"I gave it two jerks to let him know!" he said.

"He understood," he said. "He's not going any further."

Big Sister studied the watch. "Twenty seconds," she said.

The little man stamped his stocking feet. "Look here, fellows, this is foolishness. Give him a minute." He hugged himself. "That's plenty long enough down there." He looked at Ellen and Clara and shook his head. "Trouble enough already," he said.

"I'll give him a minute," Good Doggie said in an angry, chattering voice, "and a damned short one, too."

"Could he have got out the other side, Ellen?" She was shocked at the steady quietness of her voice.

"We looked. No marks. And he'd have called."

"Yes," she said.

They stood silent. At long intervals, Big Sister called the time. Far across the ice, they heard the ringing of a fire bell. "That's Jeanne," Mr. Johnson said. "She's quick." Up the river, a skater shouted, a long, high, shaking cry.

"Fifty seconds."

Good Doggie began to pull. "Can you make it, fellow?" the little man said.

When there was a free end to the rope, Mr. Johnson skated quickly in and seized it. Good Doggie backed away. Together they pulled. The others watched the water-hole.

George's head came up and drifted toward the ice. "All right," the little man said. "Hold him there." On stocking feet he ran forward and lay down on the sticks. His head was close to George's as he clutched him. "Nothin', he says," he called out in a loud voice. "Nothin' at all." He wrestled with George. "Folks, I can't make it," he said. "I keep slipping."

She was skating forward, she was on her knees. She stretched out and grasped the icy stockings of the little man. She could not hold them. She inched ahead and seized the edges of his trousers. She felt some one grasp her ankles.

Breathing hard and splashing water, George crawled by her on all fours.

"All right, all right," the little man said, impatiently. "Let go my legs." She backed away.

Big Sister's hand came under her arm. She stood up. Big Sister's voice was booming slowly, quietly. "You come with me. We'll go back to the house. All right," she called to murmuring voices, "she'll come with me. Get those men home and make them run. Make them run. Clara," she said, "you must come."

"Yes, Clara." The voice was Anna Lyle's.

"Go on, Anna," Big Sister said. "Go on away. Clara, you must come. The boys have done everything. They'll get the firemen and planks and ice saws now. There's no use to wait. Clara," she said, "they're going to do everything."

"I'll come," she said. "I'll come." She took a long, hard breath. "Fitz!" she cried in a loud voice. She listened. Back in the town another fire bell was ringing.

Once there were sled marks on the dark ice. It was foolish, she thought, to let children come out there with sleds. She stumbled on the bank. There were the whites of Levi Mistletoe's eyes. Levi and she climbed the wooden stairs, crowded together. Her skates made the cinders crackle. At the top of the stairs stood the great bulk of her father. She fell against it. So then Fitz-Greene was dead.

In the night she woke, heavy with the drugged drink of Doctor Considine. Why, this was her own old room of white and silver. She sat up in her bed. Lights were reflected on the ceiling. She looked out the window and fell back, strangled. All among the islands, there were torches.

XXIII

She sat at her desk in the upstairs library. The window beside her was open to let in the first authentic day of spring. Birds were busy in the back yards. Sunlight fell across her desk. Above the blank brick wall of the next house was a patch of intense blue sky with a frivolous white cloud. In front of the house snow water, she knew, filled the gutters. Buds of the locust trees were swelling. The last ice cakes were drifting down the river, white and slowly turning in the bright, blue water. On the islands the mist of tangled branches showed faint pink and yellow. Spring had come early this year, they said. To her it did not seem so.

Her arms in black, ribbed silk with cuffs of white linen lay across the check book on her desk. She ought, she supposed, to get on with her accounts. She wished that she had come to the end of this check book and could start another. On these stubs that were forever flying up, there were too many entries to remind her. "Three skeins white wstd." That was for his skating cap. They had never found it. "One pr. fur gloves; six pr. men's white dress gloves," and below that, sounding most unbusinesslike, "for Fitz Xmas." And then, of course, there were all the entries of last month, for flowers and carriages and extra chairs and for the men at the

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cemetery. The bill had not yet come from the man who made the gravestone. George had attended to that and had gone out to see that it was properly set up. She, herself, did not want to go there any more. She would be expected to go at least each anniversary and lay flowers on the grave. It was the custom. But she would not do it. That was a scene of the farce beyond her power to play; it was too much to ask her pride. The others did not know, of course. They spoke of the accident. They argued endlessly, she knew, among themselves, how he had failed to be warned about the ice, how it was no one's fault and yet they all must share the blame. But she knew. Let them think what they would. Before his death and since, she had done all that could be asked of her. Now as time passed she saw things clearly. It should not be asked of her to bring flowers to one who preferred death to another day with her.

And yet. And yet, one must bring flowers somewhere, and where else could she bring them, now or ever? Her head sank on her arms. Below she heard the front doorbell ring. She sat up bitterly. All these people! She was not even free to cry.

She heard Christobel murmur at the front door and then her mother's voice. "Clara, may I come up?"

"Oh, yes," she said. Her mother was punctilious, but what would she do, if she had called down "no" to her? She wiped her eyes with her black-edged handkerchief, and blew her nose as silently as possible. She tried to see herself in the silver top of the ink-well. In that grotesque reflection, her nose was enormous, but not red. She could not tell about her eyes. They were tiny and far away, and close together like a ferret's.

Her mother swam into the room. Her fine figure in its tight black satin looked as though it had been cast in gunmetal. From the landing, Christobel, her arms akimbo, peered into the room. She nodded once, and vanished. She felt reluctant awe of Mrs. Rand.

Dutifully, Clara stood up. Her mother kissed her on the forehead. "My dear," she said, "how are you today?"

"I'm fine, Mother."

"You have been crying," her mother said.

"No, I haven't."

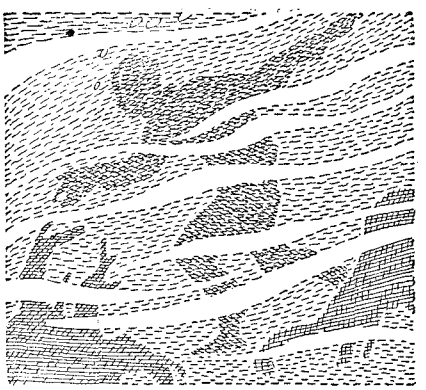
"My poor child! You should be out on a day like this. You mustn't stay in the house and mope."

"I'm not moping," she said. "I'm doing my accounts."

"It's hard, I know," her mother said, "but what's done is done. . . . It's God's will," she added with the detached conviction of one who states a mathematical axiom.

"Sit down, Mother," Clara said.

"I mustn't stay," her mother said, as she always did. She sat down in the leather chair in front of the cold fire-



place. "I suppose you've written to every one who sent flowers by this time," she said. "Sit down, my dear." She pointed to the other arm chair.

"Yes," Clara said, "I have, and answered all the letters. A few still keep coming from his college friends in the West."

"The letters are comparatively simple," her mother said. Comparatively simple, Clara thought. "After all, one can hardly mislay a letter, but the flowers—" Her mother opened her reticule of black velvet. The silver clasp was enormous. "I know you made a list," she said, "but things are so disturbed at such a time."

"Mr. Riser made the list," Clara said.

Her mother drew a paper from the reticule. "Well, of course, he's an excellent man, very careful and painstaking. I thought the arrangements were admirable. But one can never depend entirely on other people." She opened the paper. "This," she said, "is a list that I made out myself. I thought we might compare it with your list. Then if any one has been left out——"

Clara leaned forward and stretched out her hand. "Thank you, Mother. I'll check it over with my list." She was heartless, she supposed, to deprive her mother of the pleasure; but she would go over no more lists with her.

"Be sure you do it," her mother said. "If we get the list checked, that will be everything. The marker is being put up today, George tells me. He will go out tomorrow to look at it. I think it would please him if you went too. George has worked very hard over it. It would please him to feel that you were interested."

Clara nodded and kept her lips closed tightly. It would be terrible to laugh.

"Your father has sent money to the fire companies," her mother said, "and to the men down the river who——"

"Yes," Clara said quickly, "I know."

"He sent fifty dollars to the Hope company and fifty to the Four Leaf Clover, and a hundred to the Superbas. They had the most men out. Of course, it all came to nothing, but I must say they were all very active."

She felt her mother's speculative eye. "Clara, I'm sure it isn't good for you to live here by yourself."

"Oh, but I want to stay here, Mother. I feel as if this house were my own."

"At home you could have the whole top floor," her mother said. "George's room could be turned into a sitting-room. You could entertain your friends there and if you wanted a meal on a tray at times, that could be managed." That was indeed a concession. "Your father and I have talked it over," her mother said. "We could even make the play-room into a library. And your father says that a dumb-waiter could be built. It would be almost like a house of your own."

The poor, dear bear! Pottering about the back of the house with his ruler, making drawings of the dumb-waiter that was to bring her home. But this house was hers, this and no other. And it was all she had to show for her love and for her marriage. Once she had left it, there would be nothing. And it was small, and cosy, and charming. She must cling to it.

"It's sweet of you to want to do all that," she said. "You mustn't think I'm ungrateful."

"Indeed not," her mother said. "You have always been most grateful for everything your father and I have done."

"But I must stay here."

"Very well," her mother said. "We will do everything to see that you are

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well looked after. I will stop in every day." She rose.

"Thank you, Mother."

"Don't come down," her mother said. "I just stopped in." She paused on the landing and turned. "Perhaps it might be well to engage a companion for you. It would give you company."

"A companion," she said. "That would be horrible." Her mother went down the stairs.

That evening there was a little fire in the grate of the library. She sat in her accustomed chair and opposite her, George smoked his pipe. By some instinct, he had started to push up a chair from another part of the room, but she had said, "No, George." So he had sat down in the dark red leather chair where Fitz had always sat. He had not put on mourning, but he wore a dark suit and a black satin tie. His square chin dropped down in the opening of his wing collar. His bushy eyebrows jutted over his blue childlike eyes. He had grown, she thought, to look more like his father.

"Ellen stayed home with the children," he said. "She'll be in tomorrow." He took the pipe out of his mouth and smoothed the bowl with an immaculate thumb.

"I went out there today," he said.

"Oh, did you?" she said. "Mother was here this morning. She said you were going tomorrow."

"No, I went today. It's all finished. The workmen were still there. I made them put a spirit level on the stone. It's set square and it's well down below frost line, two feet six. The lettering is all right. It's all very nice and simple, just right."

"Mother thought I ought to go out with you."

"What for?" he said. "A man can do that kind of thing the best. You know how it is. These workmen will always pay more attention to a man."

She smiled a little. "Yes, that's so, I suppose."

He thrust the straight stem of the pipe at her. "Anything you want done," he said, "you come to me." He thrust his pipe in his mouth hastily, and assured himself that it was still alight.

"Yes," she said. "I will. You don't mind my not going with you?"

He gave her a slow, impudent smile. "Didn't even notice it, Sis."

Heavily she answered his smile. "I knew you wouldn't. Mother thought you would be insulted."

He puffed on his pipe. "Never was insulted in my life, or if I have been it's gone by me. I suppose that amounts to the same thing."

"Pretty nearly, I guess," she said. "Poor Mun Worrall, for instance."

He hoisted himself in the chair with enthusiasm. "Yes, look at Mun. Always being insulted—waiters, railroad conductors, cab drivers, acquaintances, friends, enemies, everybody. There never was such a fellow for getting insulted. And the funny thing is, he seems proud of it."

"Oh, no," she said, "he's proud of the answers he gives. That's what he always tells you about: how he set them down where they belonged."

"Well, I suppose if a man wanted to be proud of that kind of thing, he'd better be proud of not having to set them down instead of having to do it."

"You don't understand Mun," she said.

"Yes, I do. He's all the time playing the clown and exasperating other people, and if any one bothers him, he's furious. I don't see what he's done in the world that's so important."

"That's it," she said. "He's never done anything. It makes him sensitive."

"Do you mean to say," he demanded, "that if he made a million dollars he'd be different? He'd be terrible."

"He's been wonderfully nice these past weeks, fussy, of course, but kind and sweet. That means a lot to a woman. Too much, perhaps." She stopped.

"Yes," he said, slowly, "I guess it does. And it should, too, I suppose." He was silent.

"George," she said, after a while, "do you think I need ever go out there?"

"Do what?" he said. "Oh, go out there. Why, no, I suppose not. Not if you don't want to."

"I don't," she said, "ever." She was looking in the fire. She felt that his eyes were on her. She looked up. He was inspecting his pipe.

"Well," he said, "there's no reason why you should. Not at the present. Everything is in good shape. Excellent."

"I don't want to, ever," she said.

"Well," he said. "I certainly wouldn't go now. It's hard enough to pull yourself together. No use to tear things up inside for no reason. Some people seem to like to do it, but I'm with you." He puffed on his pipe. "In a way I'm sorry about that provision in the will. Otherwise he could have been buried in Philadelphia. It would have been the natural thing."

"Yes," she said.

"Well, never mind," he said. "Let's never talk about any of it, again."

"Oh, but," she said, "I don't mind that. Nobody ever seems to want to talk about it."

"I know."

"It's almost a conspiracy. And that seems queer." She clasped her hands together. "Because, you know, I think there was something fine and wonderful about that night. Does that sound morbid?"

"Oh, I don't know," he said.

She stared in the fire. "The way every one worked and did their best, and you and Doggie and that little man, and Jeanne Balso running in her stocking feet through town."

"You know," he said, "that old fellow wouldn't take a thing. I got him two hundred cigars, though. Sent to New York for them. The best that can be bought. He probably won't like them."

"I wrote," she said, "and asked him to come and see me sometime."

"That was nice," he said, "but won't it be too hard on you?"

"Oh, no," she said. "I tell you that everything about that night seems wonderful to me. The way you went in under that ice even when there was really no chance left. I suppose I should have stopped you, but Ellen said you must go. She was magnificent."

"Ellen," he said, "was pretty good. I ought to have been the first, but those fellows had clamp skates. They simply beat me, and there was no time to argue. As it turned out, of course, none of it made any difference."

"It made a difference to me," she said, "and it always will."

He looked at her with a small, modest grin. "You know, I guess a minute and a half must be pretty near a record for that kind of work."

She smiled back at him, warmly, and nodded. "Yes, I guess it is."

"I only mean that doing it sort of makes up a little for having been the last. You know how a person sometimes feels." She leaned far forward,

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and touched his big hand resting on his knee. This he allowed for a moment, then put it in his pocket. "You know," he said, "what haunts me? I suppose I oughtn't to say this."

"You can say anything," she said.

"If I hadn't been off like a damned fool with Anna Lyle, I'd have told him about that ice. Doggie says he mentioned it, but now he can't be sure he heard. I'm not blaming any one, you know. I'm just awfully particular about things like that, just happen to be made that way. If I had been there, I think I would have made it plain. Instead of that, I was—" He smoked. "I wake up in the night," he said. He put the pipe down on his knee. The thread of smoke wavered and failed. It was going out. He did not notice.

She was standing over him. "He knew," she said. The pipe in his hand came up, dropped again on his knee. His face was turned toward hers.

"He knew?"

"I told him when we were off together."

"Why, then—" he said. He looked away from her.

"Yes," she said, "I was ashamed to tell." Her voice was calm and low. "I loved him and he couldn't—" A black flood rushed on her. She was whirling down. George's arm was round her, his deft hand held her shoulder, delicate and firm.

The last sob rent her and was gone. With distant, faint reverberations, his pipe dropped to the floor.

"Now then," he said. "Now then. Never you mind." He held her in his lap in the leather chair. He stroked her shoulder. "Now then, never you mind."

She sat up. He brought a huge, white handkerchief from a breast pocket. She buried her nose in it and blew. The sound was tremendous. She could not help a sad little giggle. He looked at her. His childlike eyes were misty and dreadfully concerned.

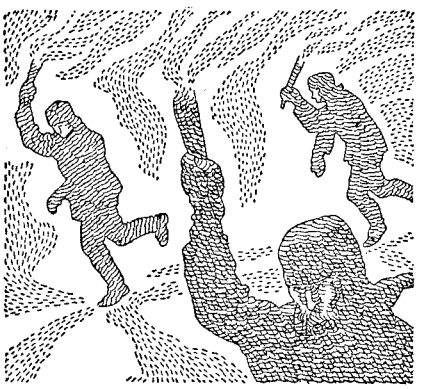
A weight pressed on her. "I suppose we must tell Good Doggie," she said, sorrowfully. "Poor Doggie!"

"Never mind about that now," he said. He allowed her to put the handkerchief back in his pocket. "Look here," he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll just go back and get my things. I'll take the upstairs room. How would that do?" She stood up and brushed back her hair. He got up slowly, staring into the fire. "Have you got a tin pot?" he said.

"Why, yes, I guess so."

"Well, then," he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll make you some tea, right on this fire." He looked at her and smiled. "I'll show you the way we used to do it in the Adirondacks."

It was late, the town was asleep. They still sat before the dying fire, the teacups on the table between them.



George's hand rustled in a tin of ginger snaps. He munched slowly.

"We ought to go to bed," she said, "and yet I hate to."

"Is it bad then?"

"Oh, no," she said, "no worse. But this has been nice, just sitting here. I wish it could go on."

"A cup of tea," George said, "is a great thing. You take coaching, for instance. Sometimes, when I get in at night, I'm really tired, especially in the fall. Driving through the dark, you know, responsible for all those people, and half the time the farmers never carry lights, and then it's cold. But if I can have a cup of tea when I get home, in five minutes I'm ready to do it all over again."

"Yes," she said, "it must be a strain. I don't think people realize it."

"No," he said, "they roll along, having a good time, just like the passengers on a ship."

Yes, she thought, they were passengers and they could not have been in better hands. Never was a man more competent in all affairs.

"George," she said, "I wonder if you could tell me something."

"What's that?"

"I wonder if you could explain it."

"Well," he said, in a quiet, sure voice, "I'll try."

"I feel ignorant," she said, "I keep asking myself things over and over."

"I know," he said, "a person sometimes does. Go ahead."

"All during the last winter, I tried to puzzle it out without letting any one know. And since he has been dead, I have thought I might be able to understand it, because now that life seems long ago. It seems as if it belonged to some one else. I thought at first I might be able to get a better view and understand it." George's hand was rustling in the tin. She locked her fingers together. "He really left me last fall." George's hand stopped. He sat very still.

"Oh," he said, "did he?"

"Yes," she said, "it was all a farce, last winter. It was hard to keep people from finding out. I was afraid they would."

"Yes," he said. "It must have been."

"And all that time," she said, in a low voice, "I kept asking myself what had happened, and why it had happened, and what I ought to do. I suppose I ought to know more about such things," she said. "It all came very suddenly. There was no drifting apart, just one night when he got back from Philadelphia."

His hands were clasped in front of him. He was listening closely. "If it had happened sooner," she said, "it would have been easier to understand, or anyhow, I would not have felt so shamed. Because," she said, "I was very bad when we were first married."

"You were bad?" he said.

"Yes," she said. "I didn't know anything and I was afraid, afraid as I could be; for a long time. I can see," she said, "how he might have thought then that I did not love him."

She steeled herself and went on. "But between that time and the other, there was a time when, it seemed to me, we were very happy, both of us, in every way.

"What I thought, when he left me, of course," she said, "was that some one else had come along. But still I thought that he would come back, and I thought so more just before the end than at any time. I was wrong, I know now, of course, but it seemed so then.

"And now," she said, "I am not even sure there was another person. That is what makes me bitter."

"It does?" he said.

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"Yes," she said. "In the time when we were happy, I used to look back on those first months when I was just a silly, frightened child, and think how wonderful he had been. I loved him, I think, as much for that as for anything."

"Well," he said, slowly, "I suppose nothing can change that anyhow."

"But it can," she said, "because now it seems as though all of it had been a part of the trick."

"What trick?" he said.

"The trick," she said, in a low voice, "to win me. It must have been a game for him. And when he had won his point, he had no further interest." Her voice tightened. "He was always kind and always charming, but he had no further interest. Then at last he got sick of it, so sick of it that he skated——"

"Hold on," he said. "You don't know why he did it."

"Tell me another reason," she said. "His business was all right. At the funeral, his brothers did nothing but talk of how well he'd done. They thought it would please me to know there was no chance that he had killed himself for business reasons."

"They didn't know that he had done it," he said. "Nobody knows but you and I, and even we cannot be sure. You know how some fellows are. If you tell them a place is dangerous, they want to go and have a look at it. It was dark there."

"He'd skated all his life," she said. "You could feel the ice thinning out, and you could see the hole. It's no use to try to fool me. I can't even fool myself."

"Whether he did it or not," he said, "a man like that wasn't worth your little finger. It's a hard thing to say, but however it happened, it happened for the best. It's too close yet, but some day I think you'll see it. He fooled us all," he said, "and we're all to blame, all except you."

She shook her head. "It's no use, George. Do you know what I feel like? I feel like a kitchen maid that's been dazzled and dragged down and laughed at."

"I wish he'd died," George said, heavily, "before you ever saw him."

She was on her feet. "Don't say that," she whispered, softly. "He was—" She was shaking. She sat down in her chair and gripped the arms. "Don't say that," she said.

He was patting her and muttering phrases. Poor George! There was no more help in him.

XXIV

Always people kept coming in. It was well-meant and she was grateful; but they seemed to feel that they must assiduously whittle down her hours of loneliness by staying long, although they had nothing to say; singularly little indeed. For herself, of course, knowing what she did, there was nothing to say. But to them it must seem an accident which had ended a happy marriage. And yet, they mentioned Fitz-Greene seldom, a form of delicacy. It was strange that some of them, at least, should have had no customary words of praise for the departed. Not that she wanted them; she was happy enough to escape the mockery. But she wondered why they were not forthcoming. Did they, after all, suspect the manner of his death? She must, she thought, concoct with George some message that would ease Good Doggie's mind. Or had their rodent instinct led them to facts or to clever guesses which ended in a secret and a different estimate of him? They were kind, these people, and they were loyal to her with an almost savage loyalty. There was nothing, she knew, that they would not do for her, nothing. On every side, she was buttressed by their devotion, buttressed and constrained. She was glad of an arrangement of her father's that took her driving every afternoon. Punctiliously, they alternated according to his plan. One day, he drove her with Lou Belle and Planet in the light roadster. The next, she drove him with Norah in the spider.

Today it was her turn. In her bedroom, before the mirror, she buttoned a long black coat across the front of her black silk dress. She wore a straw sailor, low and broad-brimmed, almost a duplicate in black of the straw hat Fitz-Greene wore, standing, in the photograph on the wall, among the other straw hats of handsome and decorously jaunty Aurelians.

From her bureau drawer, she took her old pair of brown cape driving gloves. They were one of the minor satisfactions of the whole arrangement. Every other day, she wore them, when it was her turn to take the spider. Brown gloves with mourning and, above all, on a recent and peculiarly tragic widow had caused, she knew, some comment in the town. But to wear black gloves for driving was unthinkable, though hardly more so, to her notion, than to wear them for any other purpose. Black gloves were one more of the minor tragedies that followed in the wake of the great disaster. They were morbid, creeping things, and when, as in proper mourning, they were not suede, but slick and shiny, she felt that they made the wearer an object of loathing to beholders and to herself. She drew on the brown driving gloves. Why could not the desolate be permitted to make shift to assuage their sorrow with gloves as warmly ruddy, as richly grained, as these?

The afternoon sun lay deep across the bedroom floor. It was a pity the drive must come just at that time of day. The yellow wall-paper was bright; on the bed the green counterpane shone. Across the street, under the glow of faintly greening trees, boys were shooting marbles, black silhouettes against the wide sheen of the river. On the bricks of the sidewalk, the light roll of a baby carriage sounded. She went to the window and looked down. It was Ellen, all in gray. She supposed she should call to her, but then she would stop and talk. There were many sides to Ellen. She was a watchful tigress over George, but then, that night on the ice, she had been a Roman matron. Again, with Fitz-Greene, she had been quite youthful, charming, and flirtatious, and again with Mrs. Worrall she was the faithful, good companion. But at the moment, she was, unfortunately, every inch the mother.

She looked up. "I can't stop," she said. "The baby would wake up. How are you? All right? You're going driving? Oh, yes, here comes Levi." With small even steps, her small figure kept moving on. The baby carriage rocked slightly to the waves of the brick pavement.

In front of the old, pressed-brick house of John Rand, she pulled up Norah and turned the wheel. The spider sprang up as Levi Mistletoe stepped down from the dickey. But before he could go to the door, it opened ponderously, and her father came

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down the brownstone steps. He removed his cigar and raised his square-topped derby. Levi went to Norah's head, he turned toward her father's dark, majestic figure and tipped his hat. At the same time, he grinned to offset the formality of the effect. In answer, John Rand twinkled on him and raised a gloved hand almost imperceptibly. "Hello, Clara," he said, as she threw back the lap-robe. The spider sank beneath him. He bent forward ponderously and tucked the robe around him.

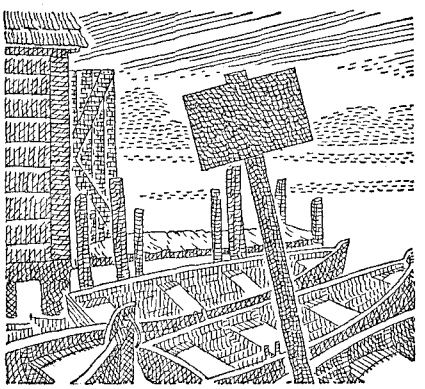
"All right, Levi," Clara said.

Levi came back, pausing to give the robe an added tuck around her father's shining congress boots. They must be nearly of an age, Clara thought. It was curious to couple them together in that fashion. Yet starting from origins so different, they had become alike, so that now, as Levi seriously tucked the robe in under John Rand's feet, it was really one stout old gentleman taking care of another.

Her father waved his cigar in his gloved hand. "That will do, Levi, thank you." Once more, the spider settled lower as Levi took his seat behind.

As they moved up the river, people on the sidewalk bowed or raised their hats with solemnity. The town was pleased to elevate the daily drive to a ritual. They saluted the young widow's weeds with conscious reverence. The spider might have been the hearse itself. Even Mrs. Munkittrick, who was always on the street—"just like a police on his beat," she remembered a song learned from Levi in the harness room, when she was a little girl—even Mrs. Munkittrick had bowed to her with courteous distinction. In a word, the daily journey was an ironic and petty royal progress through the domain of mistaken reverence for her bereavement. The phases of the farce were infinite, but here, at least, the rôle was not exacting. She had merely to bow gravely in return. Even the little boys of Billy-goat Town stood round-eyed in the littered gutter to watch them pass. There was good in everything, if one only looked for it, she had been told. In this case, obviously, the benefits of the disaster had descended on Levi and clothed him in immunity from his tormentors.

The country opened up, winter wheat showed in black fields, the first hint of spring sunlight lay on her face and on the melting ice floes on the river. She must not be bitter. The people who had greeted her and her father could not know what she knew. Let them alone then, they meant her well. Light, fluffy clouds swam in blue brilliance overhead. Full-bellied robins bounced on the damp, warm earth under the trees. Somewhere a cow was lowing. In a field a man on a wooden roller shouted to his team. She must not resent the success of her imposture. She must not be unreasonable or silly. She must not be bitter.



Four light, swift wheels behind them; Gus Ringler's two black trotters in their interfering boots and blinkers, and Gus Ringler's wide red face and red mustache under the little derby hat. He gave a pull with his wide-spread, meaty hands. The reinloops trembled.

"Heyo, Clara," he said. "Well, John, here's where I get a chance to beat you on the road."

Her father waved his cigar with detached benignity. "Maybe you couldn't," he said, "if Levi weren't so heavy."

Gus Ringler's red mustaches lifted in a grin. "I guess that's right," he said. "She's a cute little mare, she is. Heyo, Levi." The black team moved ahead. Gus Ringler's fat back vanished up the road.

"A plain sort of fellow, Ringler," her father said, "good-hearted, though, and an excellent business man. I remember there was some little discussion with your mother about inviting him—" Her father stopped.

"To my wedding? Yes."

"Do you remember how he put on Samuel's apron and helped to serve? Your mother was quite upset."

"I remember," she said lifelessly, "he was very funny."

"And the German song he sang? Oh, I guess that was afterwards."

"After Fitz and I had gone? I wish I'd heard it."

"What became of the wedding present he and Mrs. Ringler sent you?"

"I sent it to the bank," she said. "It's too valuable. It's solid gold."

"Of course it is," he said. "Must be worth three thousand dollars, that vase, if it is a vase."

"Yes," she said, "I guess it's a vase. Fitz-Greene used to say it looked like a prize for the wrestling championship of the world. There's nothing you can do with it in a house like mine."

"Clara," he said. "I don't feel comfortable about you living there alone."

"Oh, I'm all right."

"You have some valuable plate." He raised his cigar to his mouth and drew on it. "It would be feasible to arrange the top floor at home as an apartment," he said. "It would be feasible to install a dumb-waiter." He waited for her to speak, inspecting his cigar. "Naturally," he said, "you are a grown woman and would wish to have your own friends and all that. I understand that; so does your mother."

"I know," she said. "But I love that little house. It has all my things."

"Yes, yes," he said. "I know. You would want to keep them, of course."

"But I want to keep the house."

"You could certainly do that, too," he said, "then if, at any time, you wished to occupy it——"

"But I want to occupy it now. I want to live there always."

"I know," he said. "It has happy memories for you, of course, my dear."

"It has all kinds of memories," she said slowly.

Her father allowed his cigar to rest upon his knee and turned to make sure that the curtain shut them off from Levi Mistletoe. "Clara," he was very serious, "he did not use you well?"

"Oh, yes," she said, "he was kind."

"Of course," he said, "there are the adjustments of married life. We know that." She did not answer. "I might tell you now, I think," he said. He studied his cigar. "At the time of your engagement, I took the step of sending Riser to Philadelphia for a week to make all proper inquiries."

"Oh, and what did Mr. Riser find out?"

"Nothing but good, naturally, only

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what we all know. Before coming here, Fitz-Greene had been three years in the home office with his brothers and had given an excellent account of himself. He did not gamble, he had no debts, and as a member of the Rankin family, naturally he was received everywhere."

"That was all?"

"In effect, yes. Riser s report was detailed, of course. If you would care to see it, I will show it to you. But most of it is of a financial nature, and would hardly interest you."

"No," she said.

He looked ahead at the trotting, shiny Norah. "Daughter," he said, "you are unhappy. Come home. You are my daughter," he said firmly, "and must be protected."

Her hands trembled on the reins. "Protected?" she cried. "I've always been protected and look what it's brought me to."

The patting hand on her knee fell dead. She turned toward him. Heavily he stared ahead. "Father," she said, "why did I say that? You are good to me and I am bad." She felt the hand begin to pat her knee again.

"Perhaps you'd like a trip abroad," he said after a time. "Rome and Paris and all that.

"It could be arranged," he said. "Easily. It would be very interesting."

Her throat closed. "Oh, no," she cried in a choked voice. "I only want to live here in my house."

XXV

In the library, Big Sister cocked a long and shapeless foot on the fender of the fireplace. Opposite her, Jeanne Balso, a flash of black hair, high color and brilliant blue, lay back lazily in the red leather chair and watched her with amused respect. Clara in her black ribbed silk sat between them on a rocking-chair whose sleigh-like runners moved slowly to and fro. The emptied teacups were before her on the table. Big Sister drew her chin down on her large gold horseshoe pin, further crushing what was meant to be a military collar. She frowned heavily under her brows at her shoe.

"Well," she said, "that was a nice tea. I wouldn't be surprised if that marble cake made me sick."

"It's not heavy," Clara said. "It's just the name."

"This was," Big Sister said. "It was good, though." She fetched a handkerchief from the side pocket of her brown jacket and wiped her downy chops. "There's something I wanted to say." She heaved sidewise and thrust the handkerchief back. "Maybe it is too soon, but it's got to be said sometime, I guess."

"Oh," Clara said. Her rocker stopped, hung suspended.

"You can't go on this way," Big Sister said, angrily.

"Why not?"

"You'll make yourself sick."

"You think I ought not to live by myself?" Clara smiled, weary but relieved. So that was it.

"No, sir. I do not. Of course, Doggie's all right but I have often thought if I could just have a house of my own." So that was not it, then. She waited alert. "What you need," Big Sister said, "is something to occupy your mind."

"Well," Clara said, "I have the house."

"If you were dumb," Big Sister said, "that would do. But you can run this house on an hour a day. I do mine."

"It takes me most of my time to do it," Clara said.

Big Sister's foot came down. "Look here," she said. "You know you're not a dummy. You've got tremendous brains. Hasn't she, Jeanne?"

Jeanne sat glowing in the red chair. Her smooth close bodice was a vivid blue, her skin was warmly dark against the crisp white ruching that stood against her neck. "Oh, yes," she said.

"What do you want me to do?" Clara said.

"My girls," Big Sister said.

"But I don't like good works. I truly don't."

"Oh, come on," Big Sister said, "you ought to give them a try."

"The more you dislike them, the more credit it will be to you," observed Jeanne Balso.

"It might be a credit to me," Clara said, "but it would be of no use to any one else."

Jeanne Balso stirred the triple flounces on her skirt.

"You might learn to enjoy them," she said. "I did."

"Yes," Big Sister said, "look at Jeanne. She was much worse than you."

"I was much worse," Jeanne said. "I used to hold hands with every man I met."

"She still does," Big Sister wriggled her eyebrows in scared pleasure. "It's one of her strong points with the girls."

"It's one of my weak points with the men," Jeanne said.

"But," Clara said, "I don't care about sewing, either."

"Never mind the sewing," Big Sister said.

"But it's not in me."

"You'd be the best of all, I'm afraid," Jeanne Balso said. "You have my charm and Big Sister's ideals."

Clara smiled.

"Yes," said Big Sister, seriously, "and brains too. Well, anyway," she said, "you're missing a lot. You'd be surprised at the things they say when they find out you don't mind anything."

Clara shook her head. Those girls of Big Sister's were splendid, no doubt, but they belonged to another world. It was a better world than hers, she guessed, and from her little height she envied them. But it was useless to pretend to bridge the gap between them. Big Sister might succeed with her girls, though even there she suspected it was for both sides a mere pretense, an amiable and half-unconscious conspiracy of self-delusion, lacking reality. Though what life's reality was was also a question. Her love for Fitz-Greene had been real, and where was it now? Even her love for her father had suffered mutation, something that had been withdrawn from it for Fitz-Greene was lost and could not be returned or even found. It would never again be central and all-sufficient. The great bear, poor dear, had diminished in size and potency. He was again, as he had been before, the first love of her life. But no longer did he hold safety and all wisdom. He, too, was mortal and ultimately helpless in the toils of circumstance. In the vast cavern of the universe, all men were mortal. And each, she had learned, was ringed at birth with fundamental isolation. It took extremity to disclose this gulf; and once perceived, life never could be the same again. That was the dark, the almost unbearable secret of maturity. No one could help another; all men were mortal and alone.

Big Sister was speaking to her. "I know you don't want to work with the girls. We didn't mean to bother you.

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We just think about you." She knitted her brows, crossly. "You know."

Jeanne Balso stirred. "That's it," she said. "To think that some one like you should be so sad," her voice was low, "when nothing ever happens to me."

"Oh, sugar, Jeanne," Big Sister said. "You're not so bad."

"Before I came here," Jeanne raised her black eyes in conscious recklessness, "I was engaged to three men at the same time. Twice," she said, "and they were all different men."

Clara smiled.

Big Sister pursed her lips in a soundless whistle. "Well, I guess that's bad, all right," she said, "but I kind of envy you."

Christobel's voice came from the landing. "There's a man down here that wants to see you."

Big Sister and Jeanne stood up. "We must go," they said.

"Oh, no," she said. "It will probably only be a minute."

She followed them down the narrow stairs. "I do like this house," Jeanne Balso said. "It's like a doll's house."

"I wish I had a house like this," Big Sister said, "but Doggie would break everything."

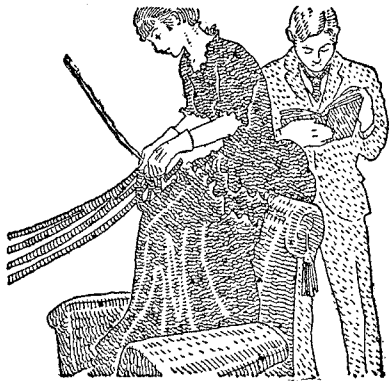
In the hall, they paused for a covert glance into the little drawing-room. They glanced at each other. "Goodbye," they said. "We had a lovely time."

He looked like a gnome among the gilt and crystal of the drawing-room. She hardly recognized the little man who had been with them on that night, Hans Brinker, they had called him. Mr. Twilliger, his name had turned out to be. His suit of shepherd's plaid was too tight in the body and too long in the sleeves. Only his knobby fingers peeped out below the cuffs. He sat rigid on a gold chair tapping one blunt knee, while the other hand made sure that his green, ready-tied necktie was still attached to the collar button. The tightness of his coat across his barrel chest threw into high relief George's cigars in his waistcoat pockets. His hair, well damped, was scrolled across his forehead to one eyebrow. His thick-soled shoes were freshly blacked. He sat in patient, exquisite discomfort, obviously slicked up and turned out with final instructions by his daughter.

There was talk of the weather and of his truck garden in his daughter's back yard. There was talk of his daughter and of her children's progress through the grades in public school and through the diseases common to their age and station in life. There was talk of her husband's position in the Royal Eagle Laundry. All reference to that night was laboriously avoided. Unbuttoning the straining buttons of his coat, from his ruby-colored crocheted waistcoat he produced a cigar for Clara's inspection.

"George gave me these," he said. "I didn't want to take them."

"But he would have been terribly



disappointed if you hadn't," she said.

"Well," he said, "that's about what I figured. He kept after me one way and another, and at last, I says to my daughter, 'I guess I'll have to do something about it to ease off that young fellow's mind.' "

"Well, I'm glad you did," she said, "George was pleased."

"Well," he said, "so was I. As long as he knew I wasn't looking for nothing."

"Oh, but he knew that. We all did," she said. "We were all just grateful and wanted to show it."

"Well," he said, "a fellow can never be too careful, though." He shook the cigar at her. "Take a look at that. Go on. Take it. Smell it."

"It certainly smells very good," she said.

"Good! I guess it does. What do you think a cigar like that costs?"

"I don't know," she said.

"Well, I don't know, either, although I seen George on the street the other day, but I didn't like to ask him. But there's a fellow on our block that used to be with the cigar factory when they had it. He says these cigars can't be sold for less than thirty cents apiece. That's the minimum. Might run anywhere up to fifty." He took out another cigar and squeezed it between his fingers. "So what I do is call it a forty-cent cigar. 'Here you are,' I says, when I meet a fellow, 'a forty-cent cigar.' Sometimes, they're scared to light up. Think the cigar will explode or smell bad or something. You know those trick cigars." He smiled at her under his sweeping mustaches. "Then they find it's the genuine article. You ought to see their faces."

"It must be fun," Clara still held the cigar, "to hand cigars around like that."

"Well," he said, "it is, for a fact. Of course, I smoke one myself, now and again, but I've been smoking Sweet Dreams for twenty years now, maybe more. That's a three for a dime cigar, a little strong for some people, but it just suits me. No," he said, "keep it. Probably be a friend of yours in sometime."

"Thank you," she said. She put the cigar on the mantel.

"You know," she said, "it all seems queer giving you cigars, even the best, for what you did."

"It was nothing," he said, "none of us did nothing. We failed, didn't we?"

"That was not your fault," she said. "If any one could have succeeded, you men would have. That is the way I feel about it."

"Well," he said, "I guess we did as good as most fellows could when you come down to it. I guess maybe that does some good, makes you feel more like it was something that had to happen. In my wife's time," he said, "we lost three children, and, of course, we felt mighty bad about each one. But the second one died of croup, one night when I couldn't find a doctor. I went to four places before I could get hold of one. Then it was too late. Seems like that child, Harriet her name was, preyed more on my wife's mind than the other two put together. And on mine, too, I guess. It seemed like something that needn't have happened."

"Yes," she said, "that must have been awful for you."

"Well," he said, "it was. My wife never really got over it, although we raised five others."

"What grieved her so," he said, "was that in the end all these doctors got my messages and come around. We had four doctors to the house, with all their tools and everything to save her, within

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an hour after she was dead. My wife used to say that it seemed like the devil was playing a prank on us. But then later on when the other children growed up and turned out good, she got over such notions, but it always grieved her."

"I know," she said. "Poor woman. I am glad that I can never feel that way."

He made sure of his necktie. "Oh, well," he said, "everybody was glad to do his best, and I was just as glad as the ones that knew him."

"I know you were," she said. "You were splendid."

He waved her aside. "Fact is," he said, "I felt like I did know him. I like young folks, kind of miss them since all mine has moved away. But I never taken to a fellow like I did to him. All I did," he said, "was to go up to the end of the island for a couple of logs with him. We talked along. He said that if he had a pair of the right kind of shoes, he'd like to try my skates. Fact is, we fixed it up to try them, the next night. Well, you know, most of the young fellows kind of look down on them old skates.

"Yes, sir," he said, "I felt like him and me had been together a long time. I'll always feel that way.

"Look here, I oughtn't to be going on like this," he said. "My daughter told me—. Why Lady—" he said, "Lady, you must excuse me. I didn't go to make you feel so bad. I just got talking."

"Oh, no," she said, "I'm glad you did. You must come again and talk."

XXVI

Spring night had fallen on the river. She sat at her bedroom window, looking out. Beyond the black trees there were only swift gleams on the water and misty silver distances. Far away were pin-point lights from farm houses on the dark shore. Down below town a late team rumbled on the bridge. Even at night, she felt the river growing warm and fragrant in the air of spring. Young water rats were coming out to play, wild ducks on their northward flight were feeding in the rushes. Along the shores, the birds were nesting and squirrels and rabbits peeped out of holes.

But as she sat there, holding back from going, as at last she must, to the dark prison of her bed, pictures of Mr. Twilliger, of George, of Mun, and the rest besieged her. The faint praise or deprecation of those who knew Fitz-Greene best would never convince her now. The truth about him lay in the praise of strangers, a truth so blinding and so final that nothing the future held could ever diminish the magnitude of her disaster. He was lovable and she loved him still. And he had spurned her and chosen the unknown depths rather than any more of life with her. Her head sank down. That was a rival she had never counted on. But such was the truth and nothing could ever abate a single letter of its condemnation. She loved him and he, kind and gracious to the last, had gone to the uttermost lengths to cast her off. This was the message spring, the looked-for healer, had brought to her.

And spring by now was almost gone. In the back yard, the snowdrops had showed their frail white beads and let them fall. Crocuses had pushed up through the grass, had swelled their tight buds and flung them open to the sun. Flatboats, hauled down from sandy beaches, puffed flatly up the river to anchor in the stream and dredge for sand and coal. By daylight, the island thickets showed a mist of green, the distant hills had turned from gray and brown to blue. It was the time she had been waiting for. She had felt that if she could hold out till spring, then she could manage. It was like recovery from a dreadful operation. First, there had been numbness and a sort of stunned, uneasy peace; then came the first sharp hints of pain which mounted in recurrent waves. They in turn blended into a steady flood, where there were no more shocks or unpredicted thrusts, only one steady tide of misery. It was under this endless pressure that her laborious and pitiful defenses had gone down.

She had tried to think that as long as he had felt that way about her, it was better so. She had tried to think that, unable to give her love, he had meant to show by this last gesture a touch, at least, of loyalty, choosing annihilation rather than to flout her openly. She had tried to think that she had been delivered from a finally and eternally impossible dilemma. And to reinforce the weaknesses of these structures in her mind, she had tried to think of the will of God, of His wisdom and goodness, each alike inscrutable. She had told herself that the first part of her life with Fitz-Greene was the delusion, the last alone was the reality in which his true colors for the first time could be seen. With the fatuous and demented persistence of a sickened mind—she told herself—she had been hugging to herself the image of a man who never was. As if this last device had brought its retribution, the whole ingenious, meretricious structure had given away. With a crash and whirling fragments, the flood had burst its bounds and swept her down. She was overwhelmed and lost forever in the knowledge that she loved him.

What then had been left? Only to wait for spring, to hold on blindly, clinging to life until that time when life in all things would be renewed. It was as though this operation which had cut all that was best of her away, severing the taproot of her soul, had left her hanging between life and death, her being suspended in the balance, while within her there went on a race between dissolution and the healing of her dreadful wound. If she could hold till spring, when all things quickened, the wound might close in time to save her. She would then survive, go on living, in some sense, and be able at last, though maimed and forever crippled, to take a place in the world of living men.

Among the elements which ended by bringing her to face the completeness of her disaster, she could count as foremost the efforts of those who wished to help her. Dear people they had been, desperately loyal, thoughtful and generous; all of them, each in his way, suffused and made beautiful by the fastidious delicacy with which they tried to show the strength of their affection.

George, for example, was another man, a sort of new-found friend. He came in every day, to eat uncounted gingersnaps, but never to stay too long. His talks were on coaching and from them an impressive idea slowly emerged. As soon as the proprieties allowed, he was to let her drive the four-in-hand. It might jeopardize the schooling of horses that were just becoming perfect in their work. He made that clear. And certainly it was an honor that he would accord no other man or woman; but she was to do it, and he

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made it also clear that the concession was not on any grounds of blood or sentiment, but in recognition of her hands and level head. Already he had deposited *Coaching* by Howlett on her library table, together with four short lengths of rein which he had had made by the saddler. With this equipment, he explained the diagrams in the book, and particularly some small improvements on Howlett of his own invention.

Good Doggie, on the other hand, came only when she asked him, but he was always ready. Once, flouting convention, the proprieties, she had asked him in to supper. She had heard from her mother on that score, there had been murmurs in town. She did not care. Doggie seemed pleased to come. But then she found out he had given up a three-day fishing trip, carefully planned and laboriously arranged for with the bank where he worked.

"Doggie, that was a silly thing to do," she said. "The spring fishing is the best of all."

"Look here, who told you?" He knitted his sandy brows, a little like Big Sister. "Ah," he said, "Mun, the damn fool."

When she told him that Fitz-Greene knew about the open hole between the islands, it should have been a moment of release for him. For from the night of the tragedy till then, he had spoken to no one about his thoughts, he had offered no explanation and looked for no reassurance. He had simply withdrawn and sat alone, regarding himself as a murderer. To hear what she had to tell him was a complete reprieve. It should have meant everything to a mind like his, slow and simple, yet inexorable and sensitive. Instead he only stared at his big-knuckled fingers.

"Clara, I'm sorry," he said. "I'm awfully sorry. That makes it all the worse for you." He seemed to wrestle with the problem. "I guess we'll have to call him crazy," he said.

"He was a smart fellow, all right," he said, "but there were queer things about him. I guess they got the upper hand. Must have," he concluded. "Nobody does a thing like that unless he's crazy.

"You take animals. Animals never do it. It's because they're never crazy. And animals have their troubles too." He roused himself to complete the chain of reasoning. "All the same," he said, "I'm sorry."

He had sat for a long time smoking Mr. Twilliger's cigar. "Well," he said, "it's late, I'd better go." He dropped the cigar in the grate. "I suppose the town will talk about my being here alone for supper." He stood up with a grin. "Good night," he said. "The nosey pups."

Mun, on the other hand, was full of comment, especially when fortified by a few glasses of Château Lafitte. He then became dramatic and somewhat tearful. He took the highest grounds upon every subject and particularly in regard to Clara and her grief.

"I know you are unhappy," he would say, "terribly unhappy, God knows. It is only natural. You are a wonderful woman. No, now, I say this to every one. Every one knows it. Why shouldn't I say it to you? You are. Certainly that's nothing to be ashamed of, is it? Well then." He leaned forward on the table and eyed her furiously. "Let us face the facts. It all seems terrible to you now, and that is as it should be. No one can take exception to that. But remember that you have many years before you and that what has been done cannot be undone. And remember this." He took a drink of Château Lafitte, inspected the glass and set it down. "Speaking as a man of the world, I know and many other people who know life know that, while Fitz-Greene was the most delightful fellow in the world, and without the least idea of criticising one who was so highly regarded in the best circles in Philadelphia and at the Union League and everywhere else, he was simply, through no fault of his and with all due respect to his memory," here Mun's eyes were suffused, "he was simply not up to you, my dear girl, in any sense of the word. He was simply——"

Poor Mun! she should not have turned on him. He had looked quite scared, poor dear, and been unable to speak as a man of the world the rest of the evening.

Even Mrs. Worrall, to whom she turned in one of her tormented efforts to escape, could offer only wisdom. In her brown panelled reception room, distinguished from others of the town by an easy disorder and rows of books meant to be read, she sat, a neat, small figure, withdrawn from the light of the green-shaded lamp, and looked at Clara with her firm, brown eyes.

"People say we have no right to despair," she said, "because we cannot know the future. That, of course, is true, and, especially when one is young, the future may hold anything. But I feel that we have no right to despair unless we claim to know what would have been life's other possible alternatives, unless we can surely say that the life we are leading is worse than any other life we might have led, if matters had turned out differently at any time in the past. You love Fitz-Greene, and I know how terrible the loss of love is to a woman, either," she said, slowly, "through the death of the one we love, or through any other cause. But while you may grieve, you cannot despair unless you can say that had he lived, your life would have been happier. You think it would, and I am sure that I can guess the kind of dreams which haunt you. But you do not know what other kind of fate might have been in store for you or for him or for your children. This thing which has come to you may be, I know, an unalloyed disaster or again it may be a bitter sort of mercy, to one or both of you. That is something that no one can tell, and that is why you cannot despair.

"Let me tell you something about myself. If Judge Worrall had died when the children were babies instead of four years ago, I should have felt that I had suffered a desperate wrong. And yet I know now that my life and his would have been happier.

"What I am going to say may sound trivial, but I think you know how men sometimes are about such things. The Judge was a successful and distinguished man as such things go, but his heart was set on getting to the Senate. In his later years, all that ambition and singleness of purpose that had raised him from a poor boy to a leader in the state were centred on that. When he was defeated, it broke his spirit and it also changed him. I think that most men and perhaps many women go through a change in marriage, a phase of restlessness and discontent, but if a marriage is a good one, all that passes and leaves things often more perfect than before. When the Judge was beaten, it seemed to render him distracted. He became toward me a different man and a strange one. I knew not only that he

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had left me, but that whatever I could do he would not return."

Mrs. Worrall, still sitting very straight, had raised her eyes from her small hands to Clara's face. "So you see," she said, "one never can be sure."

That was what Mrs. Worrall had said. It had seemed wise then. Now it did not. One could be sure of misery that was not worth bearing.

It was late, nothing was now astir. The night was warm. Dark and close-knit. In the night and silence the river seemed to run the faster.

She looked out at the shivering patches, at the dim silver mist. Life, warm and stirring, had now renewed itself along this river down which he had rolled. What an immense and relentless stolidity went to make up the basis of this world. Even for those who knew him, there were loving and dining, the new story, the latest song. Like the owls and the river rats, they were going about their business. No doubt, it was a merciful arrangement, which enabled the world, blindly and dumbly, but somehow, to go on. But if that were so, why could not some slight portion of that mercy have been granted to her? And what of him, now that he had escaped her? Did he still exist, if not in a heaven or hell as outlined by her Bible teachings, at least in some vague refuge of the spirit, perhaps beyond those farthest stars? If so, was he triumphant or was he merely grateful and at peace? Was he regretful, or, worst of all, was he desolate or frightened? The starlight trembled and seemed to glide along the gliding river. Beyond the dark shore of that nearest island was the spot where he had stepped out of the known world, closing behind him the iron door. If she were to take the path which he had followed, what would she find? Nothing perhaps? Only oblivion? That would not be bad. Or would she find him, to plague him and defeat him, leaving him with no further refuge even in the unknown? Or would he then feel differently toward her and know why she had come? Would she perhaps be welcome? She stared at the broad river, swift, dark, inscrutable. There was a place not far uptown where one could rent a boat, twenty-five cents, the sign said. That was not much to pay for a glimpse beyond the iron door, for even the least chance of escape from destiny.

She sprang up from her chair and groped through the darkened room. Where were the matches? Could she ever light one with those shivering hands? The gas jet flared. She stood at the mirror, breathing hard, and looked at her white face as though at a ghost come back from another world.

XXVII

Seated in Fitz-Greene's chair in front of the now empty fireplace, George finished his cigar. She sat in her accustomed chair, feeling stunned and slightly nauseated, as she often did now after forcing herself to eat food always dry and tasteless, and watched the window curtain. She sat still, watching the ruffle of the muslin window curtain move in the spring air that came in through the slightly opened window. All movement, great or small, was becoming meaningless to her, almost an offense. What was the sense of that idle nervous swaying or of the wandering breeze that caused it to sway? If only all things could once and for ever be still; entranced, as in the fairy story, through the ages until the hour of their extinction, when they would dissolve in dust like mummies. Or, at least entranced until they should be wakened to some new existence, happier and more rational. Long ago, how long ago it seemed, she had wished that a moment of her good fortune and highest hope might be fixed by a stroke of magic and stand unchanged forever. Now, in her despair, she wished almost the same. But if she were wishing, why not wish for better fortune and be done with it? Impossible! Even in wishing, there must be some relation with what might be conceivable. Good fortune of any sort lay beyond her horizon. But extinction of one sort, if not another, was easy, dangerously easy, for her to picture.

George, who had busied himself in tamping out the light of his cigar on Fitz-Greene's bronze ash-tray, stood up. His gray flannel suit fell into well-cut lines. His black satin tie flowed smoothly into his white pique waistcoat.

Her heart, at least, was not so dead but that it could contract as she looked at him. So he was going home early. Another lonely evening; and the river, whether she looked at it or not, running by.

He smiled at her. What kind and assured obliviousness to all that was going on inside her mind. "I brought something for you," he said. "I'll get it." He went down the stairs to the hall.

She only wondered whether what he had brought was meant to solace her for his leaving early, whether, having given it to her, he was going home, leaving her here alone beside the running river, inside this house that now seemed no stronger to hold her than the world outside. She had thought of the house as the one small treasure which she had salvaged from the wreck. But it was beginning, here, now, right before her eyes, to go the way of all the other things that once held meaning for her.

Yet where else could she go? Certainly not home with him. Yet that, perhaps, was what she wished for. She wished that both of them were still children in their innocence, and that she could go with him and creep in bed beside him, to lie safe in the shelter of his strong simple bulk. Her harried thoughts checked. Was this a vile idea? Or was it—her heart turned slowly over—a mad one? Was she being crushed and harried out of her natural instincts, out of the possession of her mind?

His foot was on the stair. She sank back in the chair. He must not see her rigid pose.

He held out a narrow parcel as he came across the room. She fumbled ineptly with the wrappings. "I got you these," she heard him say, "for coaching. You need an extra heavy glove, extra large too."

"Oh, thank you," she said, dully.

"Try one on," he said. "I found a pair of your gloves in the hall, and got the next size larger."

The buff-colored glove, heavy and stiff, but soft, slid on, smooth and cool. He settled it firmly between her fingers. He felt the palm and the loose welted back. He pinched the tips of the fingers. "It's all right," he said. "The size is right. You'll like them when they get broken in. Now what I thought," he said, "is that it would be a good idea to wear them when we practise here. That way, you break them in and get used to them, too. Don't take it off," he said. "I thought we might do a little work on the driving tonight."

He was not leaving then. "Oh, thank

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you, George," she said. "They're beautiful."

"What I want," he said, as he went across the room, "is to get you in such shape before you start—" he found the practice reins, "before you start, that when you are up there, I'll never have to touch the reins. There is no reason why you shouldn't do it." He came back across the room pulling two Windsor chairs. "You've got good hands and a good level head. And if you get the theory right, before you start—" he was strapping the reins to the backs of the chairs, "the trouble with most people is they won't spend any time in preparation. They want to climb up on the box and drive. No wonder they get in trouble. Where's that Howlett?"

"George," she said, "thank you so much."

"What for?"

"For the gloves. They're beautiful."

"Oh, they're all right," he said. "Where's Howlett?"

"Over there," she said, "on the shelf beside the dictionary."

He swung around Fitz-Greene's leather chair. Mechanically, she stepped up on the seat and sat on the broad back. She was glad to have him stay at any price. Serious and satisfied, he handed her the practice reins. "Where's that cane," he said, "that we use for a whip?"

She was content, she thought, to have him stay at any price.

But in the middle of the lesson, at a moment when he had stopped to peer into Howlett, abruptly she saw herself. She saw herself most desolate and doomed of all mankind, perched like an ape or an infant on the high back of a chair and wrestling solemnly, endlessly with a game of make-believe. What if she learned to manage these reins attached to silly wooden spindles? It was a ghastly farce, the antics of a demented corpse that should long ago have been hidden away. And to what end? To fit her for other antics on the coach, equally grotesque and meaningless.

"Now," George said, "here it is. For a right turn, you take up the whip and the off-side leader's rein in your right hand. That's your point, of course. But as you do it, with one motion you make a four-inch loop with the near side wheeler's rein over your thumb. Otherwise——"

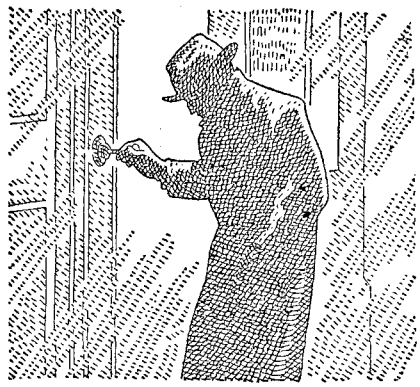
She slid down the leather chair back and sat bolt upright, staring stupidly at the Windsor chairs and the tangle of practice reins on the floor. She heard the book close and his voice, "What's the matter? Had enough?" His tone changed. "What are you looking at?" He had her by the shoulders. His voice seemed like a shout. "Clara!"

"I don't care," she said. "Not about anything."

"Clara," he said, "old lady."

"He hated me," she said.

His hands were light on her shoulders. "No, he didn't," he said. "He never did."



She looked beyond him at the tangled reins along the floor. "Go away, George," she said, "and let me alone."

He took his hands from her shoulders. His footfalls sounded. So he was going away, too. And now it made no difference. Nothing made any difference except the sound of flowing water in her ears.

The footfalls came back. They passed her by and turned again.

He was walking up and down.

On the carpet, his firm, light footfalls sounded. To and fro, in a slow, unbroken rhythm.

Why did he not go home? It made no difference, his being here. They were no longer together, not remotely. She sat alone in her cold, uttermost pit, walled in and buried, lost forever to the world of warmth and light. And he, helpless, too, and utterly at a loss, tramped aimlessly an endless road that turned forever on itself and led back whence it came. However grieved for her, he still was in the land of living men and from that bright and lovely world so far above her, he never could reach down to her abyss.

Yet in the end, his tramping eased her tension. She felt the lassitude which follows the immense and horrible excitement of despair. She sank back in the chair.

He kept on walking. The sound of his footsteps slowly eased her. She was lost to him and to all other beings; but in that world above, from which she had been harried, his footsteps never ceased in their unhappy search for her.

From her cold prison she must try to reach him while there yet was time, before his search had ceased, before she lost the will, before whatever lay ahead of her might put it beyond the power of her to speak or of him to hear.

"George," she said. "Where is he now, do you think?"

The footsteps ceased. "I don't know," he said, "but I think he's all right. Absolutely."

"Do you think I'll ever see him again?"

"Yes," he said, "I think that, too."

"If I did, do you think he might feel differently toward me, if he knew why I had come? Would a man ever do that, do you think?" She stopped.

His eyes were on her. "Had come—?" his voice was low. "You love him still then."

She nodded. "I suppose I ought to feel ashamed." She clasped her hands to keep them steady. "I don't know what I'll do."

"There's nothing you can do. Nothing." His look was kindly but official. "Try to forget. Be brave."

"Be brave!" she said. "What for? If he were here there would be something to be brave for. Why should I be brave? Why should I even stay here?"

"Stay here?"

"Yes, why should I? Can't there be that much freedom?" Her voice turned sad, "Can't there be that much freedom?"

He was tramping again. Fast. Now his eyes were on her. He stopped in front of her.

"Would it make it better if you knew he loved you?"

She was patient. "Then I would have something all my life that nothing could take away. Now I have nothing."

He started walking. "You have it now," he said. "I know that."

"Please, George," she said. "Remember I told you everything, here in this room, the night you made the tea."

"You don't think I've forgotten?

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Only I thought that things were better so."

"Better so?"

"Well, it was over and done with and if you thought what you did, it might make things easier. You see," he said, "we sort of agreed he wasn't much and that it was for the best."

"Yes," she said, "I know, and I got a little angry. Now you can say what you like about him, and I wouldn't mind. It would be too small a thing to make a difference." She shook her head sadly. "It would be nothing."

"I wouldn't say anything against him now," he said.

"You forgive him then? I am glad."

"Yes," he said, heavily, "I forgive him, because he loved you."

"You keep on saying that," she said, sharply. "Do you think it makes me happy to be treated like a child? Nothing can make me happy," she said, "but I should be treated like a woman."

Queerly, because of this trivial offense against her dignity, she began to cry. He came and sat down on the arm of the chair and took her cold, heavy hand. "I guess that's right," he said. He stood up and fell to walking again. "Do you know what really happened," he said, "at all?"

"I told you," she said.

"That's all you know?"

"What more is there?"

"There's more," he said.

"If there's some one else," she said, "I don't want to hear about her."

"There was no one else," he said. "Ever. No one ever; but you.

"This is what happened," he said. "I have found it out, piece by piece." His footsteps quickened. "When you were first married, things didn't go so well, for a while. You told me that."

"Yes," she said sadly, "I know, I know."

"Well, he took it hard. I guess he didn't understand."

"I was the one who didn't understand. It was my fault."

"No. Things take time. He didn't understand."

"I know; but that was at first. Things changed. I changed. I thought we were very happy. In every way. I thought he was happy."

"So he was. Completely happy. That's what made it so bad."

"What are you saying to me?"

"I'm trying to say what I found out. I think I should."

"Go on," she said. "I don't mind what you say."

"I found out that, once when things weren't going well, he was in Philadelphia and he got to drinking at the club. Some of the fellows there told me about it. I had a hard time to get them to talk."

"Go on," she said. "You can say anything."

"He drank too much and then he talked too much. He had the idea that you didn't care for him in the way he did for you. He talked too much. Then suddenly he stopped and after that he left the club. The next time any one saw him was next morning. He showed up at his mother's still in his dress clothes and still drunk."

"When was this?"

"In October. He came home next day."

"In October. That was the beginning of our happiness. He seemed so sad when he got back. It made me love him. Then we were happy. He was happy, I thought."

"And so he was. Remember that. And so he was. But the next thing I found out was from the doctors."

"From the doctors?"

"Yes. From some doctors in Philadelphia no one had ever heard of. He had come to see them, about Christmas time, several different ones, under a false name."

"So he was sick. But he should have told me. He should have gone to Doctor Hartman."

"He was ashamed. You see that night in Philadelphia had done for him."

"Well, but I don't see——"

He turned, red and almost brutal. He almost shouted. "He had been with —with God knows who. Anybody. Off the streets perhaps—they hang around the clubs—" He dropped his voice. "Then two months later, or so, he found that—. That was when he went to the doctors. And all last winter he was going to them. Frantically. And all the time he was getting worse. He got it in his head his mind was going to be affected. In a sense, perhaps, it was. In the end, he couldn't stand it. He loved you so."

He pressed his hand against his face. "Well," he said, "I guess that's all."

She was across the room and had him by the shoulders. "George," she said, "is that true?"

"Yes," he said. "It's exactly true."

Her arms went round his shoulders. She fixed him with her eyes. "So then he loved me."

He nodded. Heavily he cleared his throat. "Ah," he said.

"Poor Fitz," she said. "Oh, Fitz." Then suddenly, "Why didn't some one tell me?"

"No one knew."

"Right at the start. I wouldn't have cared."

"Clara, no one knew."

"Why didn't he tell me? I wouldn't have cared."

"Now then," he said. "Poor old lady." He took her hand in his. "That would have been impossible."

XXVIII

In the sunny dining-room, Christobel, her hair and freckles bright copper above her light blue dress, her arms akimbo, surveyed what was left of the fried mush and syrup.

"I haven't seen you eat like that since —in a long time." She flushed. "I guess though, it just kind of wears itself out, and then one day you find you're a little better. More coffee? Starving don't help trouble."

"I know," Clara said, "you always say that."

"But you don't listen."

"Christobel," Clara said, "you have been wonderful to me. You have been."

"Oh, shucks," Christobel said. "I never had any trouble with you, excusing about this eating," she paused unhappily, "since the trouble came. And I don't blame you for that. Honestly I ain't eating right myself.

"That fellow of mine," Christobel said, "wants me to go to dances and all such, and he thinks there's something wrong with me, I guess. And if I told him what it was, that wouldn't help either. He'd think there was something wrong with me for sure."

"Oh, but you ought to have a good time."

Christobel looked at her gravely. "Sure I ought to," she said. "But how am I to do it?"

"Pull up a chair, Christobel," Clara said, "and have a cup of coffee."

From the wall, Christobel pushed up

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a chair. "Well," she muttered, "I guess no one will come in."

Turning in her seat, Clara reached a cup and saucer from the sideboard. "What if they do?" she said. "You take two lumps?"

In her front bedroom, after breakfast, she did not need to look out at the familiar sound of Norah's trot. As she buttoned up her long black coat before the mirror, she heard the wheel of the spider scrape against the curb and stop. Putting on her gloves, she went to the window and looked down on the fringed canopy and on Norah's neat, fat, shining back, on the brass terrets, hook and brow-band, check-rein, twinkling in the morning sun. Levi Mistletoe, in his massive mourning band, stood at her head, allowing her to nibble at the straining buttons of his steel gray coat.

She stopped in the dining-room to get two lumps of sugar from the white, rose-circled bowl on the sideboard. With her gloves on, she had to tip the bowl to get the small square lumps out. From the dining-room table she took a long, narrow cardboard box.

"Good morning, Levi," she said, as she stepped out on the wet and freshly scrubbed marble doorstep. He touched his hat.

"Miss Clara," he said, with a sad smile, "it's a mighty nice morning."

"Yes," she said, "it is, Levi."

She handed him the box. Norah tossed her tufted forelock; she nickered soundlessly and stretched out her small, slim neck. Her little muzzle, very black against the bright bay of her head, ran swiftly over Clara's coat, wavered, hung at the pocket, then nudged her earnestly. Her mouse-like ears were pricked, her eyes were fixed in soft intensity. Clara pulled out a lump of sugar. It was deftly picked off the palm of her hand.

Levi stowed the box under the seat. Walking sedately on his wide, lumpy shoes, he came back to Norah's head. "Now, then," he said, "don't you slobber your juice on me." He smoothed a stray hair on the shining, even wave of Norah's mane. Norah shook her mane impatiently, leaving matters worse than before. "Once she get her sugar," Levi said, "she don't care about nobody."

"I know," Clara said, "she's a little pig."

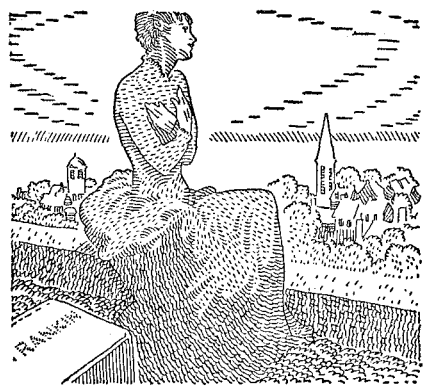
"No, she ain't, Miss Clara," Levi said. "She's the smartest, most pleasant little horse I ever had. We going up the river this morning, Miss Clara?" Levi now looked forward to parading before the little boys of Billygoat Town.

"No, Levi," she said. "Today I am going to the cemetery."

Levi lowered his eyes. "Yes, ma'am," he said, "yes, Miss Clara."

As Clara went back to the spider, Norah gently but firmly thrust Levi's bulk aside and turned to look at her.

The light damp of morning still lay on the dust of the road. Two blocks up



the street, they turned from the wide, shining river into the light tracery made by the young spring leaves on Linden Street. They passed, set back in its narrow yard of old hydrangea bushes, the little house painted bilious brown, where Fitz-Greene used to board. It was on that porch that he had sat the day they went on the canal steamboat picnic. In his suit of light pongee, he had leaned back on the porch seat, his long legs crossed, inspecting his thin cigar. The sun lay golden on his hair. She had been a little afraid of him then and a little suspicious of his graceful, amused perfection. The spider's wheels bumped lightly across the rails of the horse-car line. Here they had met Good Doggie and Big Sister.

The street of commonplace respectability ended with the tree that was encased in wire against the nibbling of the corner grocer's horse. Then came the block of railroad men, all black except for the noble gold and red of the Bock Beer sign.

At the end of the street, the old figure with his dirty flag still kept watch over the railroad crossing. It seemed incredible that he could have survived her disaster. What was it Fitz-Greene had said? "A salute to the flag." She believed that she remembered every word that he had spoken, every look and gesture. It was hard not to imagine that they were crossing the railroad tracks now. "Nothing ever happens to the man who salutes all flags." "Don't you want anything to happen to you?" "Not at a railroad crossing." Big Sister trudged beside her. George was with Ellen. Levi and the picnic basket came behind. It was not hard to imagine all of them. The feat was to imagine that Levi was behind her on the dickey, that she was driving Norah; that Fitz-Greene was dead.

The road turned off before it reached the blackened coal dock from which they had set out that day—how dreadful Mun had been with Levi and the hats. It ran beside the dark still water, then swung and humped abruptly over the canal. As Norah's small, goat-like feet thumped on the wooden planking, Clara remembered that the man in charge of the steamboat had tilted back the smokestack, passing under here.

They passed a scattering of chaotic and amorphous houses of people who lived neither in the country nor in the town, but had created an ambiguous world that was deficient in everything, even in reality. The color of the houses, once evidently painted, was indeterminate and their structure, lacking the bizarre and disorderly distinction of Billygoat Town, was merely commonplace and uniform. It was even hard, amid the dilapidation of the yards and porches, to tell which houses were inhabited; though pale children staring at her with thumbs in dirty mouths, gave evidence that this unhappy and exiled race not only existed, but was capable of reproducing its kind.

With the mounting of the road, the limbo ceased abruptly. The road was purified; it led, bright red and lightly dusty, up a long hill between grave oaks. The harness creaked, Norah's stout little back bent to the task.

At the top of the hill, white marble spectres showed among the farthest trunks. She came to an old board fence, loaded with vines of honeysuckle that had lost its bloom. A wooden gate leaned open. She turned off through it into a grassy lane.

The trees were left behind and far below her. Creaking softly, the spider moved through the long field of marble fragments. Cherubs and crosses crown-

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ed enormous deep-cut names. Polished granite raised urns and angels to the impassive sky. Fences of iron and of stone and padlocked gates continued to protect the wealthiest inhabitants in their possessions. Here and there flowers withered in glass jars and little cotton flags, already faded, awaited renewing on next Decoration Day. In the distance, an ancient figure with a rake moved slowly through the stony chaos. If he saw them, he made no sign.

Near the far end, where beside the caretaker's chapel-like stone house the proper road came in, she halted. That was the road by which she and the long train of dark carriages had come before.

"All right, Levi," she said. "This will do."

Treading delicately, Levi went to Norah's head. His hat was in his hand. She stepped out on the grass. Lifting the weighted curtain that hung under the seat, she took the cardboard box. She walked down a grassy path, between stone fragments, great and small, that strove with mottoes and devices against oblivion.

Where the hill began to fall away, old Rands, disdaining the generality, maintained their accustomed solidarity and distinction by slabs of deep red granite. Just beyond, the hill dropped off steeply. She went down three rough stone steps to a narrow terrace.

The stone was simply a low square of marble, still new, and sparkling in the sunlight. There was no mound—George had agreed to that—merely a pale oblong in the sod where many little blades of grass were pushing through the tawny earth. In the centre lay a withered sheaf of stalks. She picked them up and laid them to one side against the low retaining wall. She opened the cardboard box. The golden tulips glowed. She put them in the centre of the young spring grass and straightened up. This was folly. He was not here. Wherever he was, he was not here, and what was here would not bear thinking of.

Some of the tulips had fallen awry. She took her gloves off slowly and stooped again. With her fingers, she altered and straightened them so that all lay in a wide and level sheaf. Each one showed bright above its pale smooth leaves.

It was this act that brought her to her knees. The graveyard, the hill, the known world were swallowed in the mist. With demented and endless persistence, she knelt in the damp earth arranging the tulips in his honor, utterly alone.

She rose up stiffly and sat down on the low retaining wall. The cardboard box lay upturned and incongruous beside the grave. And on the grave itself, her blinded efforts had only left the tulips askew. She must straighten them before she left.

Below her, the tops of the nearest oaks reached almost to where she sat. She looked down over them at the spires of the town and at the roofs making planes of light and shadow among the tufted trees. Beyond them, the river gleamed under the low, blue hills against the sky. She sat beside his grave and looked down on the world she knew. This pleasant town, these hills, this broad, bright river, had seen her beginning and some day would see her end. There in that shallow bowl, she had been a child. She had spun tops and paddled in shoal water under the eye of a nurse long dead and half forgotten. She must have been a nice and gay child. Then she had been a girl, of course, and, it seems, had stayed a girl too long. Into her life of shyly curious dreams, of unconscious waiting, of trance-like seclusion, he had flashed; like the story of the Sleeping Beauty. Only she had not wakened wholly, or had wakened too late. That, not the trance, was the curse that had been laid upon her.

Perhaps a different mother might have prepared her. Even a different father might have done so, somehow, at least a little. There was no reason why a father should not help his child, especially when he was omniscient. But now the poor dear bear's omniscience had departed. He was still loved, but now she seemed the elder, and he, an adorable sweet-natured child, wise at the little games at which he played, but at a loss in the larger fields which she had travelled. And somehow even his shining, too, had been dimmed by traces of blame for her disaster. Though when it came to blame, the inescapable bulk fell on herself. More courage, less fastidious and naïve disdain of the strong earth in us, in our hearts and in our loins; more courage would have saved her, and him. It had come, at last, but, as it turned out, not in time. She had been punished, she would say it here among the dead, or on any other consecrated ground, out of all reason, for her fault. And yet it was the fault that brought the punishment. She looked down at the yellow tulips.

And so it was with him. Not with him here, with what this well-constructed coffin held, and what must be by now a mockery too horrible to think of—she would not think of it—but with his bright spirit, which still lovely, unblemished, tender, graceful, existed somewhere, if only in her heart. What iron vengeance had been dealt to him. They were two children in the vast inscrutable universe, whose little blunders of ignorance and weakness had brought down the lightning.

Why could he not have told her? Why must he hide his shame? What was love for if not for a refuge in all possible disaster? Why could he not have told her? But then why could she not have guessed? Ignorant to the last, always to the last too weak, inadequate for each succeeding crisis. But stop. She would not let herself be caught in this tormented futile round. She would not be weak.

Against an oak-tree, rising down below her, a flicker rapped incisively. Head cocked, he listened, rapped again. From deeper in the wood a song sparrow raised his delicate, brief notes. Pure, fragile clouds sailed slowly overhead, beside her feet the ants were busy. And, in between, the sunlight filled the soft mild air. The world fulfilled itself, went on, lovely, mysterious, unhurried, alert and sentient, yet blind, and blind yet undismayed. She would not be weak.

And she would not be bitter. Not bitter—she must remember her dark night and then look on this summer day. For she, against all hope, had been given back from beyond the grave her lover. She clasped her hands against her breasts. Poor dear, poor sweet, once lost and maimed and harried to despair, she had him now within her, shining and lovely and safe from harm.

THE END

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Your Dentist's Detective

"It's a good thing we made these X-ray pictures. Here's a small hidden cavity which I could not discover without my X-ray detective."

POSTPONING a visit to your dentist is not postponing trouble. It is bringing it closer. Time and money will be saved by a visit to your dentist every six months. It is impossible to have good health if the teeth, gums and soft tissues of your mouth are not kept in good condition.

If your dentist advises X-ray pictures of your teeth, take his advice. With the X-ray to inform him, he knows the condition of the deeper structures, the roots and the tooth sockets. In many cases early cavities can be found only by X-rays. If you have pyorrhea he may discover it at a stage in which it can be successfully treated.

Because an aching tooth demands prompt attention it is usually far less dangerous to health than the undiscovered trouble-maker. A tooth may seem to be sound and healthy and yet hidden trouble may be brewing. Infection may exist at the root of a guilty tooth long before it is suspected that anything is wrong. Meanwhile, the surrounding bony structure is being broken down and destroyed, while infection may be absorbed into the system through the blood stream. Such infection may damage the heart and other vital organs, may cause eye, ear, sinus, nerve, joint or digestive trouble.

When a firmly rooted tooth is to be extracted an X-ray picture may be needed to assist the dentist. Sometimes the roots are hooked or teeth may have failed to come through the gums. In such cases damage to the jaw-bone may result from a "blind" extraction.

If you have sound teeth and gums, then a correct diet, including some hard and "crunchy" food, will help to keep them healthy. Teeth, living parts of the body, are built by food. They need the minerals contained in eggs, milk, vegetables, fruits and cereals.

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WE GIVE YOU— THE HOTELS

WHETHER it was caused by the fleet, whether it is Rockefeller Centre with its fountains, exhibits and crowds of daily sight-seers, whether it's Repeal, whether we all really are having more leisure, or whether it's due to an indefinable something else, we don't know, but it seems to us that New York has suddenly and definitely become a festive resort. There are lots of ways to have a lot of inexpensive fun. Go up the Drive any evening and see the gay lights of popular outdoor places for dining and dancing. Go to the Park and hear concerts or dance to the free music in the Mall. Go anywhere at all, all over the city and find cheerful little tables tucked away under awnings over the sidewalks. These last are the contribution of the hotels. They have a major share in making summer something to look forward to in New York.

● If you want actual sidewalk cafés, there's the Brevoort and the Fifth Avenue Hotel way down on the Avenue; the St. Moritz Café de la Paix, west; the Chatham Walk and the Sulgrave Terrace Gardens, east and in the neighborhood of Park Avenue.

● Two outdoor garden restaurants not strictly on the sidewalk—one on a private street, the other in a court—both in classes by themselves, are the Park Lane Gardens and the Japanese Gardens at the Ritz.

● For roofs, try the Astor, the Biltmore, Delmonico's, the Madison, the Park Central, the Pennsylvania, Pierre's, the St. Moritz, the St. Regis and the Waldorf. Dancing everywhere except at the Madison.

● If you prefer places indoors, there's the Renaissance Room at the Ambassador, the Persian Room at the Plaza, the Summer Garden at the Roosevelt (there's dancing at all of these). And a cool little drink at the Barclay Café or the Weylin Bar will not come amiss these hot days.

KATHERINE GAUSS JACKSON.

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The DELMONICO carries on the famed tradition of its past . . . meeting every demand of a most discriminating clientele.

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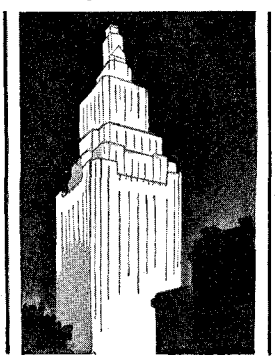

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BEHIND THE SCENES

WITH SCRIBNER AUTHORS

Edmund Wilson, author of *I Thought of Daisy, Axel's Castle,* and *The American Jitters,* has of late neglected literary criticism to write frequently and significantly on affairs of current interest for *The New Republic* and other magazines.

Lena Martin Smith is a Kansan born and bred. She and her husband work together in the field of education. For ten years he was superintendent of education and she was his high school principal. For two years they worked together on a college faculty. Then came the depression and "A Ph.D. under the CWA." Mrs. Smith has done considerable writing on the side, yet still finds time to spend the major part of the day with her young son.

Captain John W. Thomason, Jr., is a hard man to gather into a few words. He has served eighteen years in the Marine Corps pretty much all over the world and is now aide to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy. He says he has drawn some picture or other nearly every day for the last twenty-five years; that writing comes very hard to him, and that his son Jack, who is eleven years old and of thoughtful mind, is a great help to him as a critic. He is a native of Texas, hunts ducks and quail, rides as much as he is able, and thinks polo the greatest game in the world.

Nancy Hale has been on the staffs of *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* and is now a reporter on *The New York Times.* She has contributed stories to most of the well-known magazines and won the O. Henry prize for the best short story of 1933. She published her first novel, *The Young Die Good,* in 1932 and her second, *Never Any More,* will appear in the fall.

William Faulkner of Oxford, Miss., became famous in this country with the publication of *Sanctuary,* although three earlier novels had already been acclaimed in England. His last novel, *Light In August,* has been on best-seller lists all over the country. He went to the University of Mississippi, was in the Canadian Flying Corps during the War, and is now back in Oxford, still writing.

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings lives alone on a Florida orange grove, which she runs herself. She forces herself to write at least a few hours a day and rewards herself with diversions which range from night fox-hunting and rattlesnake hunting to an occasional plunge into evening clothes for a night's dancing. She is now working on a novel which she had in mind before *South Moon Under,* which she hopes to have finished before the hunting season in the fall.

Thomas Wolfe, author of the famous novel *Look Homeward, Angel,* has another one coming out in the fall called *The October Fair.* Mr. Wolfe lives and writes in Brooklyn, turning out thousands and thousands of words a month, both on his book and on stories which have appeared in SCRIBNER'S from time to time.

Coming from **Leland Stowe,** Paris correspondent of *The New York Herald Tribune,* winner of the Pulitzer prize for the best example of foreign correspondence in 1930, and vice-president of the Anglo-American Press Association of Paris, "Propaganda over Europe" becomes particularly significant.

DOCTOR WILLIAM LYON PHELPS was made a Doctor of Laws by his Alma Mater in New Haven on June 20. President Roosevelt received the same degree on the same day and was as touched and amused as the rest of the audience at Doctor Phelps's complete surprise at the honor which Yale had secretly planned for him.

GOVERNOR CROSS—Mr. President: May I interrupt the flow of eloquence and present for the degree of Doctor of Laws the orator himself? For forty years William Lyon Phelps has served this university with great brilliancy. His scholarship is represented by early studies in Gray and later studies in Tennyson and Browning. As a teacher it has always been his aim to awaken a lasting love of literature, old and new. His students may be counted by the thousands. Hundreds of them are in this audience. A former student soon after completing his course in Shakespeare founded and endowed the Elizabethan Club with its rare collections. Through lectures, essays, and books the influence of Professor Phelps has been felt in every part of the country.

By temperament, conviction, and experience he is a confirmed optimist. He is in love with all the world, and all the world is in love with him. Naturally he holds to the opinion of Browning that the older we grow the happier we are. He would like to live, he says, for the next 500 years here in New Haven, and after a short interval of rest somewhere else, come back for another 500 years. He would outstrip Methuselah by a full century.

Professor Phelps is a member of the Ameri-

(*Continued on page 12*)

WHISPER IT SOFTLY, BUT—

The lovely Miss X *of Park Avenue has..*

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You'd never suspect by looking at her, how uncomfortable she is, how utterly ashamed at the very thought of having Athlete's Foot.

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Folks who live in glass houses should never throw stones.

Before privately indicting your neighbor, examine the skin between your own toes. Does it itch? Does the skin look red, angry? Or white with stickiness? Blisters? Peeling, cracking, sore?

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RESOURCES

Cash on Hand, in Federal Reserve Bank, and due from Banks and Bankers		$ 240,360,145.29
Bullion in Foreign Branches		8,164,481.00
U. S. Government Securities		456,980,759.15
Notes of Reconstruction Finance Corporation		20,000,000.00
Public Securities		85,337,942.74
Stock of the Federal Reserve Bank		8,400,000.00
Other Securities		21,500,432.57
Loans and Bills Purchased		635,002,053.98
Real Estate Bonds and Mortgages		2,315,818.54
Items in Transit with Foreign Branches		1,862,844.25
Credits Granted on Acceptances		30,526,647.91
Bank Buildings		13,945,482.92
Other Real Estate		97,954.67
Accrued Interest and Accounts Receivable		14,726,879.57
		$1,539,221,442.59

LIABILITIES

Capital	$ 90,000,000.00	
Surplus Fund	170,000,000.00	
Undivided Profits	7,466,151.53	$ 267,466,151.53
Capital Note (Payable on or before July 31, 1934)		20,000,000.00
Accrued Interest, Miscellaneous Accounts Payable, Reserve for Taxes, etc.		17,624,076.98
Acceptances	$82,446,994.67	
Less: Own Acceptances Held for Investment	51,920,346.76	30,526,647.91
Liability as Endorser on Acceptances and Foreign Bills		129,155.00
Deposits	$1,183,188,475.86	
Outstanding Checks	20,286,935.31	
		1,203,475,411.17
		$1,539,221,442.59

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BEHIND THE SCENES
WITH SCRIBNER AUTHORS

(Continued from page 11)

can Academy of Arts and Letters. He has been diplomatized by many colleges and universities. It is most fitting that Yale should now confer upon him her highest honor.

PRESIDENT ANGELL—Loyal and beloved son of Yale, endowed with rare and blessed genius for friendship, for forty years a teacher in the royal line kindling in the heart of youth the passionate love of literature, apostle of beauty and of truth, whose pure religious faith has left indelible impress on many a troubled soul, your Alma Mater, in grateful acknowledgment of these gifts, and in recognition of your distinguished public service in the promotion among our people everywhere of sound learning, pure manners, and high ideals, gladly confers upon you her highest honor, the degree of Doctor of Laws, and admits you to all its rights and privileges.

MAHAN WALKS AGAIN

Sirs: I graduated at the U. S. Naval Academy in 1878. Having later become a commissioned officer of the Navy I was one of the officers of the U. S. S. *Wachusett* in 1885 when its captain was the subsequently famous Alfred T. Mahan, author of world-changing books on Sea Power. I believe that I am the only living person among those *Wachusett's* officers. Also, while at the Naval Academy, Captain Mahan was chief of our then "Department of Ordnance and Gunnery." So I knew him.

SCRIBNER'S for April, 1934, has a vivid article by L. M. Hacker on "Admiral Mahan, the Incendiary." Its introductory sentence well says:

"Admiral Mahan's book, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History,* exerted a tremendous influence, and was a contributing factor in the World War. At the present moment in history this biography is especially important.

Later the article declares:

"It was not until 1886 that the life history of Captain A. T. Mahan really began."

Mahan's own book, *From Sail to Steam,* states that his inspiration began on the *Wachusett* in 1885. One of the Rembrandt-like pictures, which glow in the SCRIBNER article, is this:

"Silence engulfed him as he walked the bridge of the steam sloop *Wachusett* in the South Pacific Station."

But Ruskin criticized Rembrandt as not true to facts, and I must demur to the SCRIBNER Rembrandt. Capt. Mahan never "walked the *bridge*"; there was no *"South* Pacific *Station,"* and no *"sloop Wachusett."* In those days a Navy captain had no use for the narrow raised platform called the ship's "bridge," except to stand there at critical moments like going in and out of port, and give orders which no "silence engulfed." The Pacific ocean was not then divided into south and north stations, as it had indeed been formerly. And Webster's *New International Dictionary* tells you that a "sloop" is a thing of one mast and fore and aft sails. Mr. Hacker's vision of such a *Wachusett* is a specter. No one ever called the *Wachusett* a sloop of any kind while I was on it.

But these in themselves are very petty errors, and their only importance is that they disclose a general ignorance as to the great and interesting fact that it was while "silence engulfed him" on the *Wachusett,* through the long, dreary anchorage off the Yellow-Fever district (not "as he walked the *bridge,*" I know) that the thoughts came to him that later moved the world.

My only aim in making this criticism is to affirm that Mr. Hacker, who was not born till

(Continued on page 13)

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BEHIND THE SCENES
WITH SCRIBNER AUTHORS

(Continued from page 12)

fourteen years later, could not have known the conditions around Mahan that I knew when he first thought of *Sea Power in History.*"

We were generally at anchor off Central-American ports or Panama, where Frenchmen were trying to dig a canal. And in the monotony Captain Mahan "walked the deck," sometimes, and sometimes talked with me. I had been ordered to the Pacific from Newport, R. I., where I was stationed on the U. S. S. *New Hampshire,* moored permanently at Coaster's Island, where the War College was to which Mahan wished to go. Also I had previously graduated at the Cincinnati Law School when home from a European cruise, and Mahan had law questions to ask now and then. He was writing, writing, writing. But I then thought little of it. What else was there for him to do?

Froude's very beautiful essay on "Sea Studies" was on board the *Wachusett* and encouraged Mahan to make good use of sea isolation. Bunyan's *Pilgrim Progress,* the desert song of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayam, and the gospel of one who fasted in the wilderness of Palestine, can all assure the public that great thoughts come from a jail, a desert, or other crosses rather than from Mahan's easy libraries after he left the *Wachusett* for the society of Newport, R. I.

Our Sea Studies came to an end one day at anchorage off Deadman's Island in the Bay of Panama. The French were working hard at digging a canal, and unsuccessfully. Yellow Jack was also working hard but very successfully, digging graves in Monkey Hill cemetery. One day I had the "morning watch" from 4 to 8 A. M. Two yellow corpses were brought up from the sick bay and laid before me on the quarter-deck. Yellow Fever had come aboard.

The last I saw of Captain Mahan (that I remember) was one bright and beautiful California morning, walking in the rose gardens of Mare Island, where he handed me orders to sit as member of a naval general court-martial on the Island, and with a friend's bright smile.

Then he went East. And to fame. In him, not seeing his future, I saw only the man. Never have I met a more lovable aristocrat—smiling, gracious, refined. He was one of the most noble gentlemen ever on earth.

GEORGE F. ORMSBY.

Toledo, Ohio.

AN ORIGINAL OBSERVER

Sirs: In *The Men of Destiny* Shaw says of Napoleon "He is an original observer, and has perceived for the first time since the invention of gunpowder, that a cannon-ball, if it strikes a man will kill him." Admiral Mahan may similarly be said to have perceived for the first time that in a naval war the nation with a superior fleet would defeat the one with an inferior fleet. That this important discovery needed to be made is proved by Mr. Hacker's article "The Incendiary Mahan" in your April number. Mr. Hacker still doesn't believe it!

Mr. Hacker's theme, reduced to its simplest terms seems to be this: England and Germany were bound to fight anyway, but Mahan's teachings led them into a naval race, particularly in battleships, in which England merely maintained the preponderance which she had at the start. This being the case it would seem to be immaterial as to whether they had had a race or not. However, in elaborating this theme the author is so carried away by his own enthusiasm that logic is early discarded.

(Continued on page 14)

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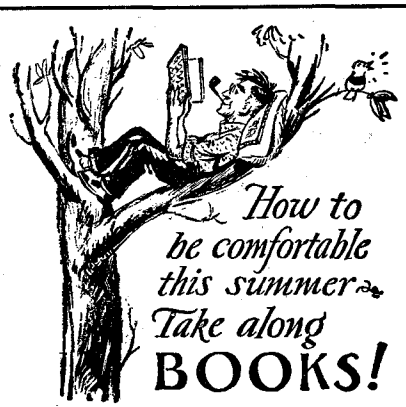

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BEHIND THE SCENES
WITH SCRIBNER AUTHORS
(Continued from page 13)

He constantly accuses Mahan of having been in some vague way responsible for the war, or for the way it was fought, or for Germany's losing it, just which is not clear: "Mahan unwittingly had furnished . . . Britain and Germany a keen sword that was to destroy both"; He "dissolved the doubts and strengthened the resolutions" of the big navy advocates in England. He implies that but for the teachings of Mahan the British would have permitted the Germans to pass them in the naval race. This is rather hard to swallow, since it would have insured the defeat of Britain in the war which he says was inevitable.

Mr. Hacker could be pardoned his ignorant cocksureness about naval strategy and even his hypocrisy, but not his bad manners and his smugness. Throughout his article runs the undercurrent of personal disparagement familiar in the professional de-bunker. Phrases like this abound: "long humdrum years of unchanging service." "his ship idly oscillating between Montevideo & Rio," "fifteen years slipped by drowsily," "for a brief period Mahan was shaken out of his slumber." "return to his old wooden tubs, to more empty days at sea, to calls at one fever port after another." In other words Mr. Hacker would not care for the career of a naval officer.

His parting sneer at "the beauty and charm of his Christian character" is curious to say the least, and tells us a great deal about the author.

Very truly yours,
LEONARD DOUGHTY, JR.,
Lieut.-Comdr. U. S. Navy.

Annapolis, Md.

SUPREME ON THE SEAS

Sirs: Seldom have I read an article which interested me so much as Mr. Hacker's biography, "The Incendiary Mahan" published in your March issue. While I freely admit the brilliance of the author, I feel compelled to challenge the entire premise upon which his arguments are founded, and which I believe to be unfair to Admiral Mahan, Great Britain and many of her illustrious sons.

Mr. Hacker says "Mahan unwittingly had furnished the rival imperialistic powers of Great Britain and Germany a keen sword that was to destroy both." Since when was Great Britain destroyed by the sword of imperialism? Further, "Mahan's prejudices were characteristically English." Why not indeed? This great American Admiral felt the glow of the sea mastering race in his veins. In company with so many of his illustrious countrymen he sensed the true character of the English; with Ambassador W. H. Page who wrote "This island's breed is the best there is"; of Emerson who wrote "All hail mother of nations, mother of heroes"; of Professor William Lyon Phelps who declared in SCRIBNER'S that the English were the greatest race since the Romans.

But to the point. In all seriousness, does Mr. Hacker believe that England or even Germany required instruction from Admiral Mahan on the vital influence of sea power on history? Ever since the days of Elizabeth's sea captains onwards through the centuries to Horatio Nelson's immortal victories over the French and Spanish navies; until Napoleon was to learn too late that he could not dominate Europe while Britain remained supreme on the seas. Finally the relentless sea pressure of the British Navy, quietly fulfilling its historic rôle brought about the downfall of the German Empire. If these be historical truths, then the whole case for "The Incendiary Mahan" falls into the sea.

We can afford to leave England, Admiral Mahan and other great nations and men to the judgment of their peers. Their destiny and the verdict on their conduct lies in the hands of Providence.

Yours faithfully,
BASIL HONE.

Havana, Cuba.

IN DEFENSE OF PARENTS

Sirs: What Louise Maunsell Field says about eliminating parents in your May issue is all very well as a picture of the present state of human parenthood in general but I think she carries her conclusions a bit too far when she says that parents may be "finally, and no doubt painlessly eliminated."

I will grant her that scientists may be able to create life, but it is extremely improbable that they may be able to create life with the same necessary inherent instincts and capacities for human living which are the result of millions of years of adaptation and development and which lie somewhere in the chromosomes of parent-created life.

I will also grant Miss Field that the government may be able to feed, house, clothe, and educate children, and that many people would prefer this system to the rearing of their children themselves. But even in institutions where children are carefully and intelligently fed, clothed and sheltered and given individual care and training by specialists one finds a deep and pitiable lack of the necessary normal emotional security which is so common in children who have homes and real parents, and by real parents I do not mean merely biological mothers and fathers.

Then there are those who find their reason for living in their children perhaps because they have lost a well loved mate and find him again in the qualities exhibited by his child: or perhaps they find an outlet for their own emotional needs; or perhaps they find satisfactions they have been denied in their own home; or perhaps a thousand reasons why parents need children and why children need parents and why parents can never be eliminated painlessly or painfully without doing an irreparable damage to themselves, to their children and to our present and possible future civilization.

Sincerely yours,
ELIZABETH SCOTT.

Dobbs Ferry, N. Y.

COPPER NOT POISONOUS

Sirs: On page 19 of the March issue of SCRIBNER'S under the title "We Give You the Hotels," appeared the following:

". . . why copper kettles are used—resisting heat as they do, they will stay at a given temperature over a flame for an indefinite period, and not burn the contents; how they have to be lined with tin because copper itself is poison, and have to be watched carefully for wear, and constantly relined."

You would be amazed to know what a furore that statement has caused. Copper is absolutely safe when used as a cooking utensil, either with or without a lining of tin or chromium. The reason copper is lined is that some people do not adequately clean their cooking utensils, or else leave food in them for a long period of time. Then too, where certain very acid foods are cooked in unlined utensils, such as clam juice, a slight discoloration may result which, however, does not adversely affect the food. I have used both lined and unlined copper cooking utensils in my home for several years without any noticeable effect.

Copper is not poisonous, but on the contrary it is now being used as a tonic for children suffering from anemia and croup. It acts as a catalyst and helps to build up the hemoglobin in the blood.

Yours very truly,
B. B. CADDLE,
Secretary, Copper & Brass Research Assoc.
New York City.

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Books for your Library

(Continued from page 5)

THE FUTURE MADE CLEAR

THE HOUR OF DECISION. By Oswald Spengler. Translated from the German by Charles Francis Atkinson. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

REFLECTIONS ON THE END OF AN ERA. By Reinhold Niebuhr. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.

THE NECESSITY OF COMMUNISM. By John Middleton Murry. Thomas Seltzer. $1.50.

The Hour of Decision, originally entitled "Germany in Danger," is addressed primarily to Herr Spengler's countrymen. It amplifies the political ideas of his major book, presenting those ideas of course as downright "facts." The misfortunes of the present are the result of the liberal doctrines of the last 200 years, and the utter disintegration of the white world will follow from the uprising of the "human vermin" whom democracy freed when it destroyed the idea of rank. After this disintegration the white world is due to be conquered by the colored races (in this connection Russians are "colored"). There is no escape, but a race with *will* could make a final splendid gesture. He finds this will in Germany alone. The purpose of the book is to gird it for action. Spengler has no great confidence in the Nazi leaders, but for the characteristic reason that he fears that they are not statesmanlike enough to appreciate that Germany's destiny must be fought out beyond her frontiers. In brief: bigger and better wars. The book incidentally is enormously popular in Germany.

Reinhold Niebuhr is also full of contempt for liberalism, is likewise without hope for modern culture, and welcomes the cleansing triumph of barbarism. He looks to radicalism to usher in an era of social justice, but since he sees also in man a longing for absolute justice, which no materialistic program can satisfy, he finds a future for classical religion, the key to which is the conception of grace. Professor Niebuhr argues this somewhat quixotic theory passionately and yet with a sincere desire to maintain a discriminating and responsible critical balance. In his deep feeling for the need for justice he is, as Spengler would point out scornfully, more of a representative of the liberal tradition than he is perhaps aware. Neither Berlin nor Moscow loses much sleep over justice today.

For the last word on radicalism we have the irrepressible John Middleton Murry of London. Communism is coming! But differently than you think—for Marx is a Mystic! As a practical program there is this: *Every man must be guaranteed a decent minimum wage.* IMMEDIATELY. "Any compromise of any kind on this issue is treachery." Can Britain withstand this onslaught?

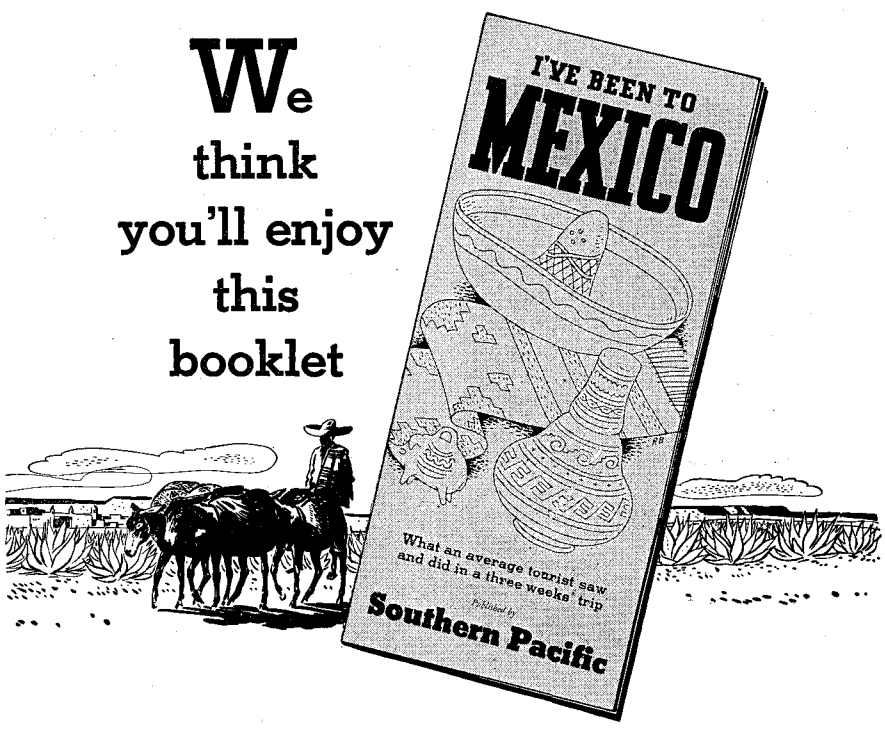
BYRON DEXTER.

LIFT UP THE GLORY, ANONYMOUS. *Covici-Friede.* $2.50.—The author of *This Bright Summer* has written another novel of somewhat lurid passions, this time involving a New England patriarch and his unruly clan. Issachar Fane was a man who took his morality straight from the Bible, but his sons were a changeling and violent lot. Their sins bring a reckoning when a dam breaks and the whole valley is flooded, and their livestock and crops washed away. A story built on the beliefs of another day, but written without conviction—a synthetic and rather dispiriting product.

OUT GOES THE TAPER, BY R. C. ASHBY. *Macmillan.* $2.—A tremendously good ghost story, with a background of eerie Welsh hills, a ruined monastery with a sinister history, a young American hero, a wholesome English heroine, three satisfactorily vicious villains, some shuddery "psychic" passages and no end of spine-tickling situations. And all done in literate, smoothly flowing prose. Not to be missed.

(Continued on page 16)

We think you'll enjoy this booklet



A young man went to Mexico City this year on our West Coast Route and wrote an account of his trip. We, who have read bushels of travel literature, approached it warily. We read it through and found it different from anything we had ever read before. No superlatives or flowery phrases. Just a frank, honest account of a trip to Mexico, mentioning names, prices, facts. We threw all our old ideas about travel booklets out of the window and published "I've been to Mexico." If you would like a copy, write O. P. Bartlett, Dept. S-8, 310 South Michigan Boulevard, Chicago. It's free.

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Books for your Library

(Continued from page 15)

SUN ON THEIR SHOULDERS, BY ELIZABETH EASTMAN. *Morrow.* $2.50.—In which a new facet of Americana gleams for the first time in fiction—the Finns who raise cranberries in the bogs of Cape Cod. Strange people, with outlandish customs brought over from the homeland, but with entirely human emotions, rather more definitely expressed than those of the New Englanders among whom they have settled. The theme of the novel is the age-old clash of old and new generations. It is developed with color, power, and passion—an exceptionally impressive first novel.

MANHATTAN PRODIGAL, BY GEORGE TICHENOR. *Farrar and Rinehart.* $2.50.—Southern farm boy comes to New York after almost fatal fracas with fanatical family. Marries wrong girl, ultimately divorces her, weds lass he should have taken in first place, and settles down to placid future on farm almost as run down as the one he left in the South. Story moves quickly and has some good characterizations.

SPIES AND THE NEXT WAR, BY RICHARD W. ROWAN. *McBride.* $2.50.—A horrifying picture of espionage past, present, and to come, fully documented, with all its apprehensions well borne out by facts, and filled with good stories, interesting illustrations, and startling surmises as to the way the "next war" will be and is now being waged. It may kill your faith in human nature and ideals to read it but it's thrilling reading.

WILD TALE OF OIL REPUBLIC

BLACK RIVER. By Carleton Beals. Lippincott. $2.50.

From his position as a commentator on Latin-American affairs—a field in which he is pre-eminent through first-hand information, lack of bias and vivid reportorial ability—Mr. Beals now turns, at least temporarily, to the novel form. These three qualities he has carried over into his new medium, with the result that *Black River* is informative, honest, and intensely readable. The fact that its author has not the slightest trace of novelistic talent has not, in this instance, worked to the prejudice of his book. Packed with incidents, milling with characters who wander in and out of the story at will, crammed with luscious details of human activity in the field of exploitation, whether it be financial, sexual, or economic, this wild tale of the oil-republic of Mexico will hold the reader's attention in book-form, and then it should appear in the movies. For it offers ideal opportunities in that field—there is enough dramatic action here to furbish a dozen motion-pictures; there are enough "colorful" characters to provide fat parts for half the stars in Hollywood; and there is a moral too, which the reader may find if he is looking for it.

ALVAH C. BESSIE.

TREATISE ON RIGHT AND WRONG, BY H. L. MENCKEN. *Alfred A. Knopf.* $3.—This new volume, Mr. Mencken informs us, is a sort of blood brother to his *Treatise on the Gods,* which was published four years ago. At that time he tried to make plain that "there is no necessary connection between religion and ethics" even though they have for many years been so associated in the thought of mankind. Therefore, as he explains further, "my inquiries into the embryology, physiology and pathology of the one led me almost inevitably into an investigation of the natural history of the other." *Treatise on Right and Wrong,* like its academic-sounding predecessor, is a disquisition on the nature and origin of morality: its evolution, its varieties, its Christian form, and its state today.

It becomes almost a forced labor to plod through Mr. Mencken's countless, abstruse discursions, which we feel is now the result of the emasculation of a great rhetorical spirit and personality which he once possessed. At its best, the book furnishes a sharper focus for readers to understand Mr. Mencken's real position, however obsolete it is in our current folkways.

ERIC ELY-ESTORICK.

RIVER SUPREME, BY ALICE TISDALE HOBART. *Bobbs Merrill.* $2.50.—This one was once known, and overlooked, as "Pidgin Cargo." The success of the author's *Oil for the Lamps of China* seemed to call for a re-publishing under a new name. It is the story of the fight against the Upper Yangste of two American merchants—Eben Hawley the elder and his son, another Eben. More a "white man's" book than *Oil for the Lamps of China,* it has nevertheless the same feeling for the color and strangeness of the country.

BITTER BREAD, BY NIKOLAI GUBSKY. *Henry Holt.* $2.—This novel of unusual power describes the struggles of a Russian family in a provincial town of England against poverty and maladjustment, which, finally and inevitably, sever the bonds that hold an idealistic couple together. It is well conceived and constructed, the character drawing exceptional, and the writing tense and precise, conveying the spirit of truth.

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